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PHOTONOVELS, COMICS AND GRAPHIC LITERATURE
POPULAR PRINT MEDIA FOR DEVELOPMENT

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INTRODUCTION

One afternoon, I began reading a comic book, Cuidado, as I heated a cup of coffee. In the comic book a young professional woman, who reminds me of myself, is in a hurry to arrive on time at a business meeting across town. She urges the taxi driver to go faster, but they are slowed by rush hour traffic. The young woman is becoming more and more frustrated.

Suddenly, there is a heavy thump. The taxi driver slams on the brakes, jumps out of the cab and finds he has hit a little boy. The young woman rushes from the taxi, too. She bends down and cradles the boy in her lap. The boy is bleeding from the nose and mouth. When an ambulance arrives, no family or friend of the young boy is there to accompany him, and so the young woman goes with him to the emergency room. There, in the waiting room, distraught parents pace, waiting for word about their children from the doctor...



I read the stories of each parent and child in the emergency room. I was sad for the little girl who accidentally burned her face and shoulder with boiling water. I was relieved that the little boy hit by the taxi was all right and was happy to see his mother arrive. I was devastated by the grief of a father who had left his daughter with a 12 year old sitter who was not paying attention while his child drank rat poison. Later that night his daughter died...

Then, I noticed that the coffee was boiling and that I was standing in the middle of the room, totally engrossed in a piece of educational media that contained a message about preventing accidents. The message had been effectively delivered in a comic book.

For a piece of educational media to be effective, it must attract and hold the attention of the learner. Cuidado is an excellent example of a form of media that has proven capable of doing both. That media has several forms, but as a class it can be called graphic literature.

Photonovels, comic books, posters with dramatic stories and photostrips are all forms of graphic literature. Graphic literature consists of a story told through characters who are either in photographs or drawings. The graphic presentation attracts the attention of the learner and the story holds that attention. The educational message is woven into the story. Cuidado illustrates what makes popular graphic literature effective as educational media:

- o People are attracted by photographs and drawings. A drawing or a photograph of a man and woman kissing makes an immediate impact and can draw someone to a photonovel about family planning in a way that a slogan on a poster can not. Words are easier to ignore than a picture.
- o People love a good story, and once they begin to read a story they will want to follow it to conclusion. This gives the educator the attention of the learner and provides the time to present a message.
- o People identify with dramatic characters that can be either glamorous or ordinary. Once a reader is interested in the lives of the characters, he will learn along with them in the story.

Graphic literature is print material which tells a story through photographs or drawings. The graphics describe the characters, present the plot, and contribute to the telling of the story. The printed dialogue adds detail. The term graphic literature is used in this book to describe comic books, photonovels, comic strips and photostrips, but posters, pamphlets, and booklets can also present a story and often use graphics and stories to convey a message. Several posters and pamphlets are used in this book as illustrations of effective graphic literature.

Not all graphic literature is educational. Most, in fact, are commercial products with no educational message. In many parts of the world, graphic literature is a popular form of entertainment for adults and young people. Many innovative educators and communicators have capitalized on the popularity of these materials to present educational messages. Educational graphic literature has been used to show the need for community action and explain how to organize to effect that action; to publicize the need for and explain the preparation of an oral rehydration solution that can save the lives of infants and small children with extreme cases of diarrhea; to explore questions of family planning; and to present methods of contraception. As graphic literature is explored in this book, many of these examples will be presented.

Graphic literature, through plot and characterization, enables the communicator/educator to effectively:

- o **Explore emotional subjects.** The story permits an exploration of the psychological aspects of the message.
- o **Increase retention of messages.** The story helps the reader remember the message.
- o **Explore cause and effect relationships.** Sequencing the presentation often helps the adult learner understand the steps he is being asked to remember and follow.
- o **Introduce technical subjects in the midst of more interesting stories.** Presenting technical information as a part of a plot helps the audience stay with the message longer.

In Chapter I of this book, **THE POPULAR COMIC/PHOTO-STORY FORMAT**, the elements of popular graphic literature, distribution systems and pricing for a mass audience are explored. Examples are given of how educators have capitalized on the popular aspects of graphic literature to present educational messages. Chapter II, **ELEMENTS OF SUCCESSFUL EDUCATIONAL TREATMENTS**, is an analysis of effective educational graphic literature, and questions of plot selection, sensationalism and exposition, relevant characterization, and culturally appropriate themes are explored. Chapter III, **WHEN GRAPHIC LITERATURE IS THE TREATMENT OF CHOICE**, examines when graphic literature is appropriate for educational messages, how photonovels and comic books persuade, the way in which they permit detailed presentation of complex messages, and their ability to aid understanding and retention in readers with low literacy skills. Chapter IV, **THE ROLE OF GRAPHIC LITERATURE IN AN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM**, illustrates how graphic literature can be an effective channel for presenting and reinforcing educational messages developed within an educational program. Chapter V,

MARKET RESEARCH: SEARCHING FOR THE MOTIVATIONAL KEY, expands on the necessity to understand the audience, their educational needs and their patterns of media use, and market research methodology is also discussed. Chapter VI, EVALUATING THE COSTS OF GRAPHIC LITERATURE, looks at the expenses involved in using graphic literature in an educational program. In Chapter VII, A CONCLUSION, the future of graphic literature is explored.

CHAPTER I

THE POPULAR COMIC/PHOTO-STORY FORMAT

Commercially produced graphic literature attracts and holds the attention of a large and diverse adult audience. The sophisticated as well as the less educated read photonovels and comic books daily. The pulp-paper dramas are circulated through news stands, passed between friends and recirculated in the used graphic literature market. Advertisers also use this media to present product information to semi-literate adults by attracting and entertaining them with graphic literature.

Communicators who need to present an educational message to an audience dream of generating the same excitement and demand through their materials. The dream is that the audience will seek out the materials, read them intently, and understand, remember and act upon the messages presented. A mother will follow the graphics describing how to mix a remedy for diarrhea and her child's life will be saved. A mine worker and his young wife, together again after a separation of six months, will read a photonovel about family planning and take the precautions they need to ensure a well-spaced family. A teenage mother will follow the advice of a poster on a hospital wall and choose to breastfeed her infant.

This dream is being realized by communicators who have mastered the production of educational graphic literature. This chapter explores the elements of graphic literature that contribute to making it an effective and attractive media. Commercial graphic literature has the following elements:

- o a story line or plot,
- o well developed and interesting characters,
- o eye-catching graphics or photographs,
- o a well established distribution system, and
- o an affordable price.

Educational graphic literature adds the element of a message with the intention to change attitudes or behaviors. An piece of educational graphic literature will be more successful if it emulates the commercial forms.

Storyline or Plot

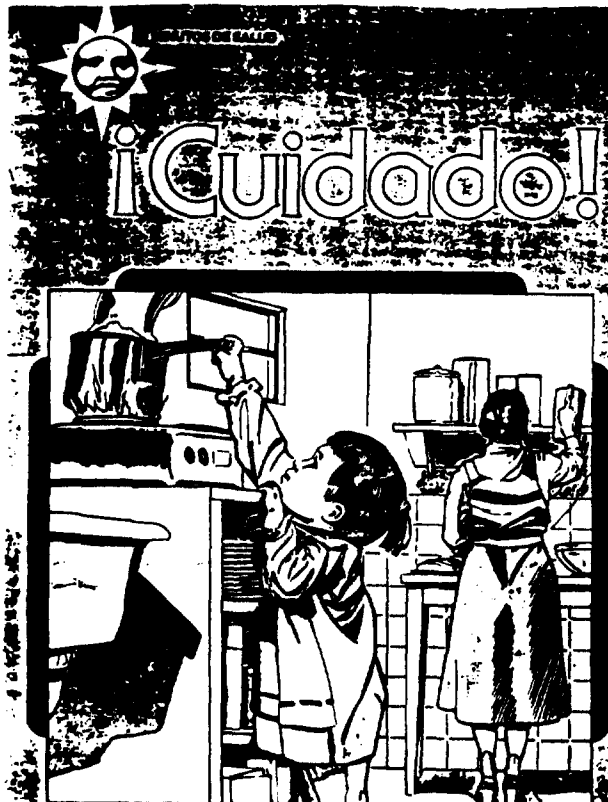
Graphic literature is distinct from other educational print materials in that it has a story line or plot. In graphic literature, a set of characters act out a story. For example, a newly married woman moves away from her family and into the city with her husband (in Un Regalo de Amour, Minutos de Salud presented below). When she becomes pregnant she has no one to talk to and a husband she is still learning to know. She is afraid and feels alone. A neighbor befriends her and takes her to a health clinic where she learns the value of good nutrition, what to expect when she gives birth, and how to breast feed. Happily the baby is healthy and well received by all. At the end of the story, the young mother finds that she now has a lot to offer the young woman next door who has just discovered that she is pregnant...



The telling of this story and the presentation of the related information requires 32 pages with 192 photographs. The same message could have been presented in a small pamphlet or in a set of posters that said: "Visit the clinic as soon as you know you are pregnant! Balance your meals, expectant mother! Breast feeding is best!" The story, though, helps to hold the interest of the reader and this ensures that the message will be heard.

Stories also help the reader to understand and to remember what he has read. A story helps the reader analyze cause and effect. For example, a story about a woman who is cooking with her child in a kitchen. The little girl has not had adequate instruction about playing near the stove. While her mother's back is turned, she reaches and pulls down a pot of boiling liquid upon herself. The mother rushes the child to the emergency room where the doctor informs the mother that the child will be hospitalized for at least thirty days and will need plastic surgery. The mother cries and worries about disfigurement of the girl's pretty face.

The picture below has all of the elements of the same story. The viewers could look at it and say to themselves, "I must remember to turn the handles of the pots inward and to talk to my daughter about safety around stoves." But this assumes that the cause and effect relationship is obvious. Several busy, middle-class American women passed by this poster tacked to a wall and remarked that it was a cute picture of a pretty little girl working with her mom. Upon closer examination, the women realized that there was nothing cute about the picture. Until the women had made up their own story about the picture -- the cause and effect -- it failed to have the planned impact. The story was necessary to get the message across.



There is evidence that people can more easily remember a story than a set of facts. Witnesses at an accident can remember the sequence of events, but, quite often, can't remember the color of the cars involved or other details of the scene they observed. Stories, both written and oral have been used as a means to transmit information from the beginning of human language because a story is easy to remember.

Peoples' lives (heroic or common place), sexual intrigue, brushes with the super-natural -- all are themes that appeal to a wide variety of people. Whatever constitutes human interest, if it is there, the audience will be engaged. The educational message may seem irrelevant to the more interesting story, but sub-themes can be woven effectively into the drama of peoples lives. Espionage and murder mystery writers use this same technique with considerable art. In order to advance the plot, the writer often must educate the reader about certain aspects of the operation of a nuclear submarine, the lore of Egyptian tombs, or the decision making process of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. A character might explain how a congressman is developing a bill and suddenly the reader is in a mini-civics course.

Similar integration of an educational sub-theme can take place in graphic literature. In the following example, a woman tries to understand why it is difficult to manage a house with five children when her husband brings home a steady salary. The woman next door, who doesn't have the same problems, explains that she and her husband have planned their family. At the same time the husband of the first woman is seeking counseling because his home is uninviting, his wife is aging prematurely and the family resources are inadequate.



With this emotional back-drop, the couple goes to a clinic and receives training on the practice of contraception. After this educational session at the clinic, which is presented in the comic, the story continues with the life of the family changed by this new information. This comic is titled "Miran al Futuro", and is produced by the Asociacion Peruana de Proteccion Familiar in Lima, Peru.

A story with a main entertaining theme and an educational sub-theme has been used effectively to present topics that are both technical and emotional. Below is an example of an effective photonovel prepared by Education for Family Planning in Lesotho in 1977. It illustrates that family spacing is not a purely technical consideration. In this photonovel, the possibility of female promiscuity and loss of family control by the male are major concerns of the husband. Two mine workers are returning to visit their wives after a very long absence. One worker has been told by his wife in a letter that she does not want to sleep with him for fear that she may become pregnant. She is ill and has three young children. The two mine workers have a very frank conversation about both male contraception and spacing of children in order to save the health of the wife. Weaving an educational message into an interesting plot is an easy and effective way to hold the attention of a learner while helping him retain what he learns.



Characters

Readers are attracted by interesting and beautiful people, people who have more exciting lives than they do. But readers also like stories about people who are more ordinary or just like themselves. In Latin America photonovels often have a plot about a poor country girl with good values coming to the big city where she struggles to make an honest living. She may become pregnant or face other problems but eventually she marries an honest young man who has lots of money. The same type of character appears over and over again in photonovels bought by city workers, the vast majority of whom have lived their own dramas as they came to the big city to find the jobs not available in their farm communities. They can identify with this character and her situation.

The types of characters are particularly important when presenting educational messages in the graphic literature format. The reader must believe that what is being talked about can happen to people like him. If the reader can identify with the character, he is more likely to believe and act upon the message presented. This identification with the character helps people to see themselves in the same situation.

Communicators find that they have to use more realistic characters than those found in commercial comic books and photonovels in order to insure that their readers understand that the educational message is for them. The readers interpret the attractive characters in commercial graphic literature as being a part of a fantasy. The reader might envy the character or want to emulate him, but the educator wants a stronger identification. Commercial photonovels in Latin America often use established or aspiring actors and actresses -- very glamorous young men and women -- to act out the plots. This leads readers in rural areas to believe that all city women are beautiful and that traveling to the city will make one beautiful. The young career girl in the city reads the same story and thinks that her way out of the tedium of her job is to find an attractive young man with a sound financial future.

The photonovel on the next page is one of the first educational photonovels to break from the practice of using glamorous actors. This photonovel was developed by the Ecuador Nonformal Education Project, a project of the Ecuadoran Ministry of Education and the University of Massachusetts, and was funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). This educational material used the format of the popular "fotonovela", but the characters were Cechua Indians living in rural villages.

The Project reported that the photonovels were extremely popular and stimulated the discussions among readers that the designers had hoped would occur. Unlike most educational media the readers paid for these photonovels. The project built upon the Indian population's fascination with seeing people similar to themselves, who lived in rural villages and did the things that rural people do portrayed in this popular media.



A believable character telling his or her own story is a powerful aid to memory. If the audience can become involved with the character they are more likely to remember the message. Below are two television public service announcements tested by the American Cancer Society. The top ad uses an anonymous announcer talking about unidentified runners. The second has the runners telling mini-stories about themselves as they run. The second ad achieved a much higher level of message recall than the first. The combination of character and story is a powerful educational tool.

**Lower Scoring Format with
Voice-Over Announcer Discussing
the Benefits of Exercise**



"Have you noticed all of a sudden everyone is running. They're running to look better. Running to feel better."

**Higher Scoring Format Utilizing
Personal Testimonial About the
Benefits of Exercise**



"I started to run because my doctor suggested it. Now I run for me. Because I really enjoy it. It makes me feel strong and more alive."

Eye Catching Graphics

Photographs and drawings attract the eye. Anyone reading a comic book on a bus has found that other passengers adults and children, glance again and again or stare outright at the pictures. The photographs or drawings immediately tell a story that people see and understand.

The photographs and drawings of graphic literature attract the reader's attention, but they must also be understandable to the reader. If they are not the reader will neither relate to the characters nor understand and remember the message. The graphics must be understandable to the reader, and the layout must help support the presentation of the story. The entire presentation must be visually attractive and culturally acceptable to the audience.

What constitutes attractive is defined differently in different cultures. A design must be specific to the environment in which the graphic material is used. The presentation must be attractive to the user, and that presentation may not be attractive to the producer of the media. If photonovels are popular with adults in a specific culture, adults will be attracted to that format in hopes of a similar entertainment experience. If red is considered a celebration color by a culture, people might be drawn to a red display in hopes of a joyful occasion. If white and blue are considered colors of saintliness, people might be drawn by an expectation of an expression of religious devotion by a poster developed in these colors.

Attractiveness ensures that the graphic literature will be examined but not, necessarily, understood. The ability of an audience to interpret the intended message in a drawing or photograph is the concern of graphic producers working with semi-literate and illiterate audiences in developed and developing countries. Current research into design of graphic literature provides some warnings. A semiliterate or illiterate audience should not be presented with a lot of text. Also, visual literacy can not be assumed with this group. Attraction, perception, meaning, and the educational value of a picture or sequence of pictures are audience-specific reactions. Any graphic literature intended for an educational effort should be pretested to determine its impact on the audience.

The communicator must be concerned with both visual clarity and with the perceived meaning of the graphics. The posters on the next page illustrate how working with an audience can help shape a graphic presentation. The first poster was perceived as a woman with a group of village children, since there were too many children to be her own. The last poster, the last in the pretest/evolution process, was understood by literate and illiterate viewers as being an African woman who could still space her family wisely, but who already had children too close together in age.

DEVELOPMENT OF A FAMILY PLANNING
POSTER FOR KENYA



1



2



3

5



4



A good photonovel or comic book is exciting, and this excitement is, in part, generated by the graphic presentation. Pacing of the story is accomplished by selecting which actions will take place in each frame of the story. If the action moves quickly in the frames, the pace is fast. This quick pace adds to the excitement of the story. Effective pacing can be developed through experience and the following principles guide the experienced commercial producers of graphic literature.

- o Don't confuse the audience with a gimmicky layout. If the audience is used to reading from left to right, let them read rapidly from left to right.
- o Lay out the situation and characters quickly. Introduce the main characters on the first page and then start the action right away.

Commercial efforts rarely deviate from this formula because it works consistently.

An interesting treatment was produced by the Centro de Produccion y Documentacion Radiofonica "El Dia del Pueblo", Lima, Peru (1986). El Abuelo...A La Radio! (The Wise Old Man At the Radio) is about young communicators who are putting together an educational radio program series with the goal of being respectful of the Peruvian indigenous culture.

In this story, Alberto, the main character, is interrupted late at night as he is preparing a program on the dangers of self-centered, self-serving behavior, by a "grandfather" of Indian origin. Alberto tries to get rid of the old man who strangely enough wants to tell him a story about egotistical behavior. The conflict is sketched as Alberto and his co-workers struggle with the education the old man is trying to impart. They listen to the story, realize that it would be very effective for getting across their message and begin working with the old man to record the story and enhance it with sound effects.



The climax comes as the whole story is finally told to the reader who has only seen bits and pieces of the story. The old man's story is shown as a drama within the drama with vivid conflict, climax and resolution. Alberto then provides the resolution by reviewing what the old man and the communicators have learned about putting together a radio program for a rural audience. The old man concludes by saying that he intends to tell many more stories on the radio.

The pace is also advanced by the presentation of the actors. The characters in the story above are young and look as if they are action oriented. Each frame shows the characters in a new, animated stance and location and each character appears to be excited and involved in the action. The reader gets a feeling of strong movement and, thus, experiences the rapid and exciting pace.

Some Educational photonovels and comic books introduce a middle-aged, graying male doctor to deliver the message. It is felt that this character gives authority to the message. Frequently, the reader also experiences a slowing of the pace as the ponderous character, often not integrated into the plot, advises the other characters on a better plan of action.

A good plot and interesting characters are important to attracting and holding the attention of a reader. But, the story must be presented with graphics and photographs that are understood. These must be presented in a format that is exciting. When all three, story, characters and layout come together well, an effective educational material results.

Distribution

Commercial producers of graphic literature have well developed distribution systems -- newsstands, grocery stores, even general stores in isolated rural communities. Educational graphic materials have rarely been distributed through these outlets; rather, they are distributed by clinics, schools, and community development organizations that can provide reinforcement of the messages presented.

Rarely can an educational comic, poster, or photonovel be credited with single-handedly motivating a family to drink only boiled water, to sit down and plan the spacing of its children, or with causing a community to organize to clean up vacant lots or cover communal wells. Rather, these media are a part of programs in which the messages are repeated through several channels. The practices promoted by educational media are complex. They often require additional work or imply other costs. To make the changes advised can sometimes be emotionally taxing. These messages are not as easy to sell as a good soft drink.

Educational messages need to be repeated and reinforced before an audience will take the desired action. Advertising principles indicate that to cause a simple purchase decision (to purchase a pack of gum, for

example), an advertising message should be heard 14 times. To motivate a person to take a complex action requires repetition through a variety of channels which affect the individual in different ways. For example, in the multi-channeled, integrated program, the Honduran Water and Sanitation Project, described in the next chapter, messages were delivered through comics to children in elementary schools to carry home to their parents; radio dramas presented similar messages to families listening together in the evenings; community development workers used photonovels and posters to work with the fathers of the families to help them to understand and take the actions required by the messages.

The graphic material may be a dynamic, entertaining, and educating masterpiece. It still needs a strong distribution system or an established educational channel if it is to get into the hands of and influence the intended audience. Educational photonovels and comic books have been distributed through commercial systems and have had the desired impact. Minutos de Salud (the example given in the Introduction), for example, was developed for a mass audience and distributed through commercial systems in several Latin American countries with great success.

Pricing

Commercial photonovel and comic book producers charge what the market will bear -- not very much. The books cost what most would consider spare pocket change so that the decision to buy is not problematic. Educational photonovels and comic books are usually given away. Some argue that not charging causes the audience to feel free to throw away the books. Others argue that a well done graphic material will be kept for years by most audiences.

A communicator needs to know his audience well to determine what they do with their books, newspapers and magazines. In a media-rich environment in which magazines and books are plentiful, charging for the books may be necessary to ensure some respect for them. In an extremely poor environment, even a penny charge may be enough to discourage reading. These questions have not been well researched, since until recently, programs rarely have considered selling educational materials to their audience.

The Message

A piece of educational media must have a message. To formulate that message the program designer must know and understand the audience. The writers of Beyond the Flipchart (prepared by the Academy for Educational Development, 1985) summarized the the present experience on understanding and audience in this way:

"Our tools for understanding the audience's perspective are growing. Our dependence on formal survey research and anecdotal information is giving way to smaller, behaviorally oriented studies. Concept testing, focus group interviews, behavioral trials, and intercept interviews are the jargon of a new genre of village research techniques. These behavioral studies help identify the hidden constraints an individual may encounter in trying a new innovation, and less visible incentives which might inhibit or promote adoption. They help message designers to select vocabulary which the individual will understand, and to integrate the new innovation into the individual's own view of problems and needs. They help us to ask not only 'How good is the new idea?' but 'How good will the farmer, mother, or couple think the new idea is?'"

Commercial producers know when their comics and photonovels please an audience; they sell. The educational communicator has a much more ambitious task for measuring audience acceptance and message understanding, retention and adoption. Educational programs measure their impact through indices such as increased audience knowledge of alternatives, purchase of products such as contraceptive devices, and, on rare occasions, a change in an index of the quality of life, such as a decline in infant mortality due to diarrheal dehydration. If the message is poorly designed, unacceptable or impossible to adopt, the best designed graphic literature will be of little or no value.

CHAPTER II

ELEMENTS OF SUCCESSFUL EDUCATIONAL TREATMENTS

Successful commercial graphic literature touches the heart and mind of the reader. The plot, pacing, and character development, if done well, keeps the reader engrossed in the story. Successful educational graphic literature, as compared to the strictly commercial, has a message and the plot, pacing and character development must provide a showcase for that message. The educator must balance the need to entertain with the need to educate.

The entertainment elements of educational graphic literature must be molded to the demands of the message and both must be designed with the characteristics of the audience in mind. The educator must first have a message that has been tested to assure its suitability and acceptance in the cultural environment. The plot and characters should then be designed to support that message.

Photonovels and comic books have a history as cheap pulp literature for the undereducated. They can be bawdy, salacious, sensational, violent, and excessively sentimental. Unfortunately, educational materials can be dull, plodding, and preachy. The educator, while keeping these extremes in mind, must control three elements:

- o the plot and sub-themes,
- o the pacing of the presentation, and
- o the characterizations.

This chapter looks more deeply into these three elements and presents both good examples and mistakes.

Plot and Sub-theme

The plot of a piece of graphic literature is the heart of its entertainment value. Western dramatic literature is based on characters involved in a situation of conflict. In a Western plot, first the setting, the situation and the characters are introduced. Then these characters act out the story which builds to a climax. In that climactic event the conflict within the story is resolved. Then the characters move on while reflecting on what has happened.

If a plot is too dull, the readers will lose interest, but if the plot is too sensational, the message might get lost or be misinterpreted. For example, plots presenting the dilemmas of a young, sexually active population can be sensational, even pornographic. The message of family planning can get lost in the interpersonal dynamics or excessively graphic treatment. A piece of photoliterature on drug abuse can teach the wrong message depending on how the life style of drug users and the sensationalism of drug use are depicted.

The educational plot must show the dimensions of the problem, the relationships and the proposed solutions, while building the interest of the audience. The photonovel "Merchants of Death," presented in Parade and Foto Action, a commercial magazine published in Zimbabwe, illustrates the difficulty of depicting the potentially sensational in a realistic, educational way. "Merchants of Death" attempts to present the horrors of drug use:

THERE IS NOTHING MORE DESPERATE - OR MORE DANGEROUS -
THAN A DRUG ADDICT WITHOUT HIS "FIX". THERE IS
NOTHING MORE UNSCRUPULOUS - OR MORE CRIMINAL THAN
THE "PUSHERS" - THE MEN WHO SELL THE DRUGS TO THE
VICTIMS OF SUCH HABITS. AND THERE IS NO ONE MORE
DETERMINED TO RESCUE THE VICTIMS FROM THE CLAWS OF
THE PUSHERS AND BRING SUCH MEN TO JUSTICE THAN THE
SPECIAL BRANCH. THIS IS THEIR
STORY. READ ON...

The plot of the police efforts to control the drug trade causes the reader to focus on the cleverness of the drug pushers and their exotic and exciting life style. Choosing to develop the character of Leo, a drug pusher, the "foto-action" inadvertently glamorizes a man who is respected by attractive men and women who appear to do little work and enjoy themselves immensely. Leo is in command of his exciting life, goes often to night spots and has a girlfriend who just sits around waiting for him to return. Leo might be unscrupulous, but it seems to serve him well. The educational message of how destructive drug use is to young lives, how criminal drug users are and how the law enforcement system will punish wrong-doers is lost by focussing on the sensational aspects of the pushers' lives.

But this time Boniface has made a fatal mistake...He has forgotten to taste the drugs as before....



Rosy is busy preparing herself. She is worried why Leo has not called around for so long...But soon she sees him through her mirror.....



where have you been this time....

After pocketing \$5,000 for flour and water, Leo hurries away from Boniface's house.....

HOUSE.....



The next thing I must do now is to go into hiding....but first I must go and collect my girlfriend Rosy!... She will keep me company!...

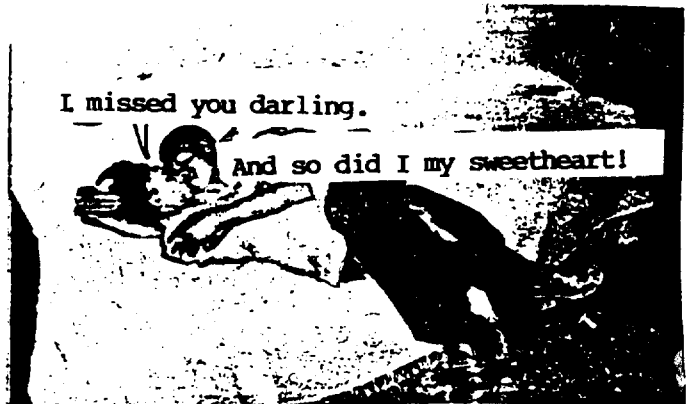
Why Darling?...don't you know I am a businessman? Sometimes I get tied up!...



And on the bed.....



I missed you darling.



The photonovel, "Contra Viento y Marea" (Against the Tide) published by the Asociacion Demografica Costarricense, San Jose, Costa Rica, in 1979, illustrates how plot can contribute to, not detract from, the educational message. Isabel, the oldest of 12 children of the widow Chaves, struggles to obtain an education while working and sending money home. Successfully completing her studies, she returns to her village and with her former childhood male friend organizes a fishing cooperative that makes a major difference in the income of the village. In time she marries her friend and they face the urgings of her mother who wants grandchildren. The young couple practices family planning and have their first child when they can afford it. The two educational messages about the power of cooperative actions and the importance of being in control of your life through family planning are well showcased in the plot of Isabel's struggle to become educated and useful outside the family.



EL DIA QUE ISABEL SE MARCHO CON LOS AGUIRRE FUE MUY DOLOROSO, PERO ELLA IBA CON GRAN ESPERANZA.







When developing a plot, first a theme must be chosen. Choosing a theme that is recurrent in the literature of a culture will help to ensure interest and often enable a less sensational showcase for the message. If the educator is from outside the culture of the intended readers, there are several ways to discover a useful theme. Three suggestions are:

- o Locate a cultural informant who can help you discover a proper theme. This could be any knowledgeable person, but a traditional storyteller, artist, writer, musician, puppeteer or actor may be more helpful.
- o Read and assess the national literature. Every culture has themes and plots that appear and reappear because they have come from a source deep within a culture. Jung calls these archetypes, a story or parable that has existed in the collective psyche of that culture for centuries. For example, the theme of rags to riches made popular in the Horatio Alger stories.
- o Study the national or local popular literature. In the United States, the National Enquirer, a publication that has an extremely high sales record, appears to have readership in all economic groups. An analysis of the National Enquirer shows the following recurring themes:

-love of children and the belief that they make life worth living,

-methods to hold marriages together and improve them,

-famous people are human too (Princess Caroline looks very pregnant in a bathing suit. Movie stars have problems with their children too.),

-health advice, and

-horoscopes and predictions.

Developers of photo literature in the U.S. would be secure in developing a winning plot around any or all of these themes.

- o Use an existing dramatic character or cultural hero Dennis the Menace, Spiderman and Mr. T have helped deliver educational messages in the United States. Often it is possible to "borrow" characters and plots for educational purposes.

Pacing

A plot should move at different speeds, allowing for a compelling series of movements that reach a climax, and then slows to permit characters to reflect on their actions, plan new actions, and begin again. This dramatic sequence is found in most Western literature and theater and is a key to understanding the appeal of most radio and television drama.

Communicators developing educational graphic literature that conveys technical information face a pacing challenge. Frequently, they must maintain momentum while presenting dense information at one or several points in the story. For example, family planning agencies have used photonoels and comic books to present the emotional, interpersonal aspects of the contraceptive decision. However, these materials often include anatomy charts and pictures of contraceptive devices in the middle of a dramatic story in a way that causes the reader to disengage from the plot and consider the contraceptive device. The message may interfere with the plot.

The distracting impact of placing technical information in the center of dramatic action becomes less important if the photonoel or comic book is used within an educational program. The technical information and the interpersonal decisions can be discussed in groups or with health workers. Developers of educational graphic literature for mass distribution should consider whether or not the manner in which they present technical information loses the audience by stopping action too radically. Or whether the density of the information is appropriate for self-study. The technical information may require group discussion, counseling or a practitioner presentation to enable the audience to digest the information while keeping the story interesting.

The dramatic comic book series, Food First Comics, produced in 1982 by the Institute for Food and Development Policy and created by Educomics, is a good example of the appropriate placement of dense information. The story of an American teenage girl exploring reasons for hunger in the Philippines is interrupted midway in the text by two pages of a chart on the The Costs of Concentration, as shown on the next two pages.

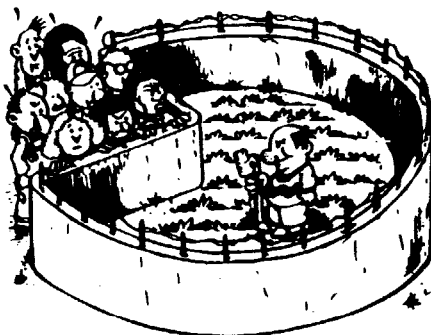


THE COST OF

CONCENTRATION OF LAND

A UN STUDY OF 83 THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES FOUND THAT ONLY 3% OF THE LANDOWNERS CONTROLLED 80% OF THE FARMLAND.

IN THE U.S., LESS THAN 6% OF ALL FARMS CONTROL MORE THAN 80% OF THE FARMLAND. 45 CORPORATIONS CONTROL OVER 1/3 OF CALIFORNIA'S BEST AGRICULTURAL LAND.



INEFFICIENCY OF INEQUALITY

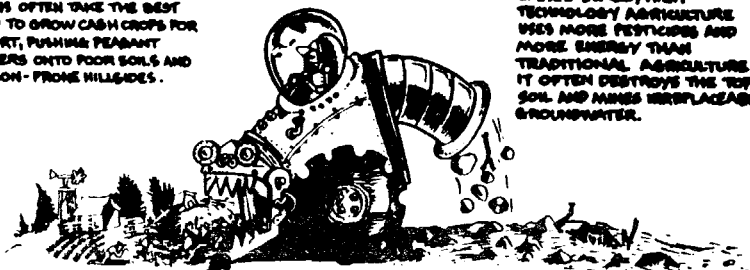
A STUDY OF 6 LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES SHOWED THAT SMALL FARMS PRODUCE 3 TO 14 TIMES MORE PER ACRE THAN LARGE FARMS.



STUDIES SHOW THAT MODERN, BIG-SCALE FARMING ARE MOST EFFICIENT YET THEY ARE THE ONES NOW BEING PUSHED OUT OF BUSINESS. MORE THAN HALF OF ALL U.S. PRODUCTION NOW COMES FROM FARMS SMALLER THAN CAN BE JUSTIFIED ON GROUNDS OF EFFICIENCY.

COSTS TO ENVIRONMENT

IN THE THIRD WORLD, BIG PLANTATIONS OFTEN TAKE THE BEST LAND TO GROW CASH CROPS FOR EXPORT, PUSHING PEASANT FARMERS ONTO POOR SOILS AND EROSION-PRONE HILLSIDES.



LARGE-SCALE, HIGH TECHNOLOGY AGRICULTURE USES MORE PESTICIDES AND MORE ENERGY THAN TRADITIONAL AGRICULTURE. IT OFTEN DESTROYS THE TOP SOIL AND MAKES IRREPLACEABLE GROUNDWATER.

CONCENTRATION



CONCENTRATION OF PROCESSING/MARKETING

A MERGE 5 CORPORATIONS CONTROL 90% OF ALL INTERNATIONAL GRAIN SHIPMENTS. A SINGLE CORPORATION CONTROLS 80% OF THE WORLD TRADE IN FOOD OILS.

IN THE U.S. 50 FIRMS (1/4 OF 1% OF ALL FOOD MANUFACTURING COMPANIES) CONTROL 3/8 OF THE FOOD INDUSTRY'S ASSETS AND 90% OF ITS PROFITS. BEATRICE FOODS MARKETS 8000 DIFFERENT PRODUCTS.

COSTS TO CONSUMERS

BECAUSE FOOD COMPANIES ARE IN BUSINESS TO MAKE MONEY - NOT TO FEED PEOPLE, THEY OFTEN SHIP FOOD OUT OF COUNTRIES WHERE THERE IS MUCH NEED BUT LITTLE MONEY INTO COUNTRIES WHERE THERE IS LESS NEED BUT MORE MONEY. HUNGRY PEOPLE IN GHANA CAN'T AFFORD TO SPEND AS MUCH FOR A TUNA CAUGHT BY THEIR SHORE AS AMERICANS ARE WILLING TO PAY TO FEED THAT TUNA TO THEIR PET CATS.

AMERICANS CONSUMERS PAY AN AVERAGE OF \$28 A YEAR EACH, CLOSE TO \$30 BILLION, BECAUSE OF FOOD INDUSTRY MONOPOLIES.



RESULT: HUNGER

AT LEAST 19% OF THE PEOPLE IN THE WORLD ARE UNDERNOURISHED.

29 MILLION AMERICANS LIVE ON OR BELOW THE POVERTY LINE. 12% OF THE CHILDREN WHO LIVE IN POVERTY IN THE U.S. ARE PHYSICALLY STUNTED BECAUSE OF MALNUTRITION.

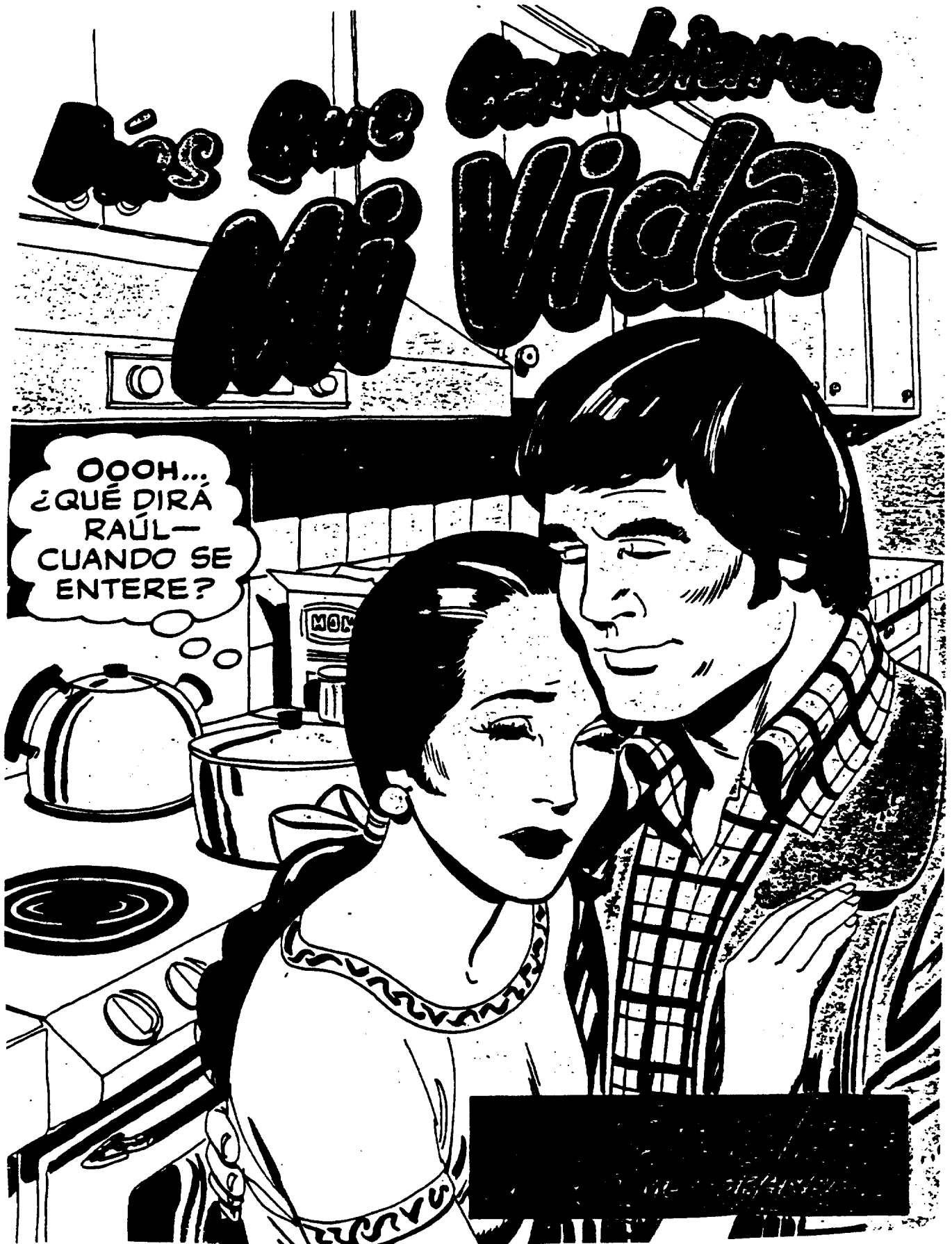


The chart follows the teenager's revelation that farm land ownership in California is concentrated in the hands of a few. The story is picked up again after the charts. The first-time reader might be jarred by the abrupt presentation of the charts, but then as an enthusiastic reviewer of the comic states, "...it would be a great resource for a junior high school or high school discussion group." (The Other Side, Vol. 1, Educomics, Seattle, WA).

Characterization

The commercial photonovel and comic book genre is popular because the readers recognize and identify with the characters. Educational graphic literature must develop this same recognition and identification in the reader if it is to be successful. If the reader feels that the characters and their problems are similar to his own, he is more likely to consider the solutions presented as having relevance to his life. Having a character that looks like and thinks like the audience helps in the identification process.

The educator must decide which characters present the message best, and there are endless possibilities. For example, should the characters be more beautiful than life like this couple determining what to do about a pregnancy:

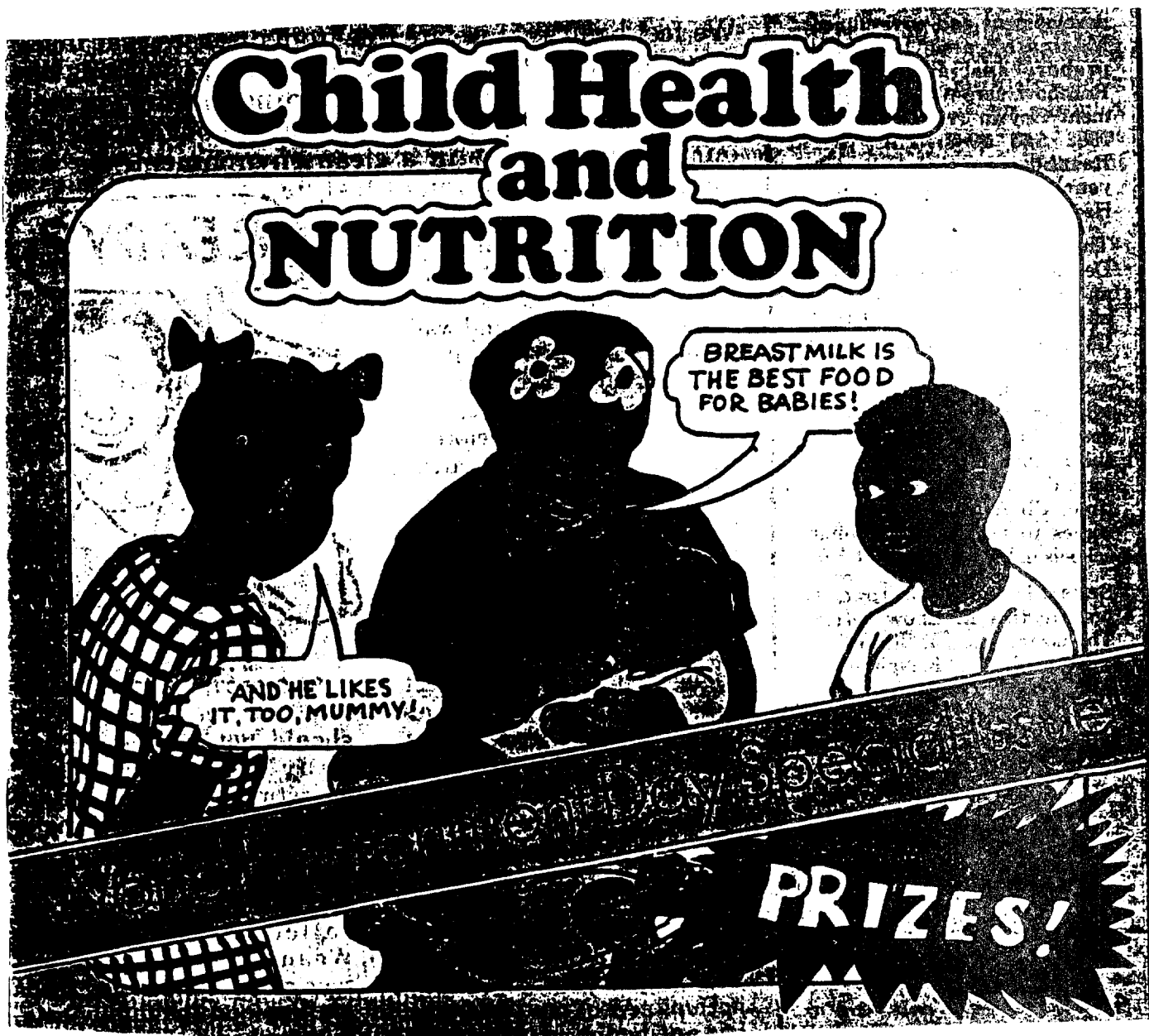


Or, should the characters be attractive, but clearly of the culture of the audience like Isabel who returns to her fishing village in Costa Rica to organize a cooperative:



Historia de una joven que amó, luchó y venció.

Or, should the character be a kind of everyman, a generic representation of their society, like the characters of Rainbow magazine, published by the Mazingira Institute in Kenya:



Three Good Examples

An excellent example of plot development, characterization and pacing is found in O Arriscado Jogo do Armor, a photonovel developed by the Department of Information and Education within the Society do Civil Bem-Estar Familiar no Brasil and produced using the resources of Santa Thereza Comunicacao Visual Ltda. Targeted for a youthful, urban audience, it traces the lives of two young women, each meeting a young man and having sexual relations.

Their stories differ widely. Marina goes to a clinic for contraception advice, while Celia throws caution to the wind and ends up pregnant. Both couples marry. While Marina and Andre revel in their enjoyment of each other, Celia and Valdir feel trapped by the pregnancy and begin quarreling. Valdir leaves Celia soon after the baby is born and takes up with another woman. The story ends with Celia's life in turmoil and her baby's welfare in question, while Marina and Andre are "free and responsible."



The emotional impact of the story is ensured by effective actresses and a talented photographer. The two actresses possess different but charismatic personalities, and they are able to portray many emotional states -- confusion, thoughtful calculation, charm and seduction. The photographer uses an assortment of camera angles and shots -- close-ups, head to waist and long shots -- and gets at the details of the characters' lives (such as Marina's T-shirt that says "unique".)

The sequencing of the photographs produces a lively pace. Careful attention was paid to layout so that the reader easily moves from scene to scene. Photographic techniques create an unusual dream sequence, and partial nudity is used extensively.



Clearly, Brazil is unique among the countries of Latin America. The bold use of nudity and the depiction of the couples' liberal lifestyles would be found offensive in most Latin American countries, and such a production would not be sponsored by a government agency. But the photonovel was produced for Brazil for a specific audience that would respond to the story with interest and sympathy. The characters are realistic and well developed and the storyline and pacing are gripping for an urban reader.

This Brazilian photonovel is presented to illustrate sophisticated pacing, storyline development and characterization. But, such sophistication is not always necessary or effective. Graphic literature may be minimally dramatic by Western standards, but very effective in another culture. Effective graphic literature does not have to be like the high-powered Brazilian photonovel shown above. On the contrary, what might be eye-catching and forceful in one culture may be disturbing and confusing in another.

For example, the sequenced photographs below would not be seen as a developed storyline by many western readers used to James Bond novels. However, in the context of the pamphlet, there is a storyline presented: family planning clinic worker comes by the family's house and talks to the husband, wife and mother-in-law of the extended family; wife takes pill; wife forgets to take pill one day; family life continues. The pamphlet has been used very effectively with women in Nepal who keep the book and reread it periodically.



The photographs are stripped of detail, allowing the reader to focus on the most important elements of the story. It is night, hence the lantern, and the woman takes the pill. The next night she forgets, remembers the next morning and then takes the pill. A rooster crowing, a sign of remembering, and day-time attire all suggest the passing of time.

In contrast to the above minimalist approach, other subjects and messages may require a much more graphic and dramatic treatment. The comic book below, The Atomic Bombing of Hiroshima: A Survivor's True Story by Keiji Nakazawa published by Educomics in the I Saw It series, illustrates the intensity possible in an effort to make the audience remember the horror of atomic warfare. Keiji has just discovered at his mother's cremation that her bones had been eaten up over the years by the radiation she was exposed to during the bombing of Hiroshima...

DAMN THE BOMB! DAMN THE
RADIATION THAT CONSUMED MY
MOTHER'S VERY BONES!
EVEN AFTER SHE DIED, IT WENT
ON EATING AWAY AT HER....



THAT DAMNED
BOMB... THERE'S
NO END TO IT....



GIVE THEM
BACK!! GIVE
ME BACK
MY MOTHER'S
BONES!!



I'LL DRAW CARTOONS
ABOUT THE ATOMIC
BOMB, DAMN IT!
I'LL FIGHT IT AND
DESTROY IT THROUGH
CARTOONS!!



AND I'LL SHOW THE
ONES WHO STARTED
THE WAR. THE ONES
WHO USED US AS
THEIR PLAYTHINGS!

HOW CAN I
FORGIVE THEM.
HOW CAN I
LEAVE THEM
BE? ... THOSE
MURDERERS...
THAT BOMB...



29.

CHAPTER III

WHEN GRAPHIC LITERATURE IS THE TREATMENT OF CHOICE

Photonovels and comic books, while having many characteristics attractive to the educator, require a good deal of work and can be more expensive than other print material. Graphic materials such as brochures, posters, and pamphlets without characterizations and plot are effective in delivering many of the same educational messages as graphic literature. These options require less technical sophistication, have fewer elements to control, and require less time to design and produce. When, then, do the special attributes of graphic literature become important in message delivery and justify the additional expense and effort?

The answer is found in three characteristics of graphic literature:

- o They can be highly persuasive. The educator needs to determine whether the audience recognizes the existence of a problem and the effectiveness of the proposed solution. The photonovel or comic can help people recognize a problem and see that people like themselves have options and solutions.
- o They are often the easiest to read print material for certain audiences. The communicator who has decided that the audience needs a printed message or reminder must choose a print treatment appropriate to the literacy level of the audience. Graphic literature has been used to communicate effectively with audiences with low levels of literacy skill.
- o They can treat complex subjects and messages, including those which are emotionally difficult for the audience to examine and discuss. Graphic literature has successfully taught complex ideas through plot and characterization, and the storyline often helps people to discuss emotional and sensitive topics.

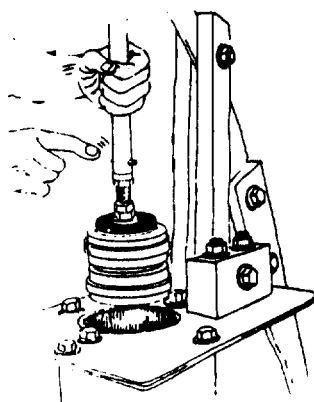
The Need to Persuade

Is the message a how-to statement or a will-you question? If the audience is sold on the need for the product or change in behavior, the message delivery should be straight forward with information as clear and concise as possible. Conversely, when the audience needs to be convinced of the need for the product or service, more attention should be given to making the information dramatic and motivational.

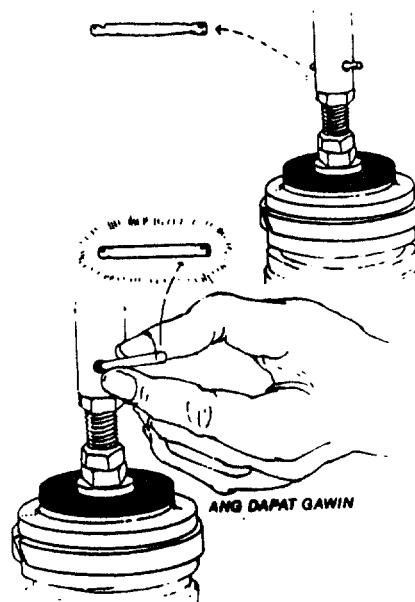
The booklet, "A Manual on the Installation, Repair and Maintenance of the IDRC-Um Handpump," is an example of a message where the introduction of plot and characters would be entertaining but unnecessary. Developed by Path/Piact for the International Development Research Center of Canada (IRDC), the manual was produced to instruct women in the Philippines on the construction and maintenance of a handpump. The same material was developed for Malaysia, Thailand, Sri Lanka, and Indonesia; only the drawing of the woman on the cover and the languages changed. The need for development and use of this technology was clearly demonstrated by the country nationals involved. They had asked for the information and little motivation was needed. The "how-to" message requires little persuasion. The format selected for this form of instruction was simple graphic line drawings, illustrating clearly the parts of the working machines and ways to put it together.



**SABAY SA PAGGAWA,
PAG-AAYOS AT
PANGANGALAGA NG
POMPA NG TUBIG
SA BAYBAYUM**



ANG DAHILAN



ANG DAPAT GAWIN

A "will-you" or motivational message, on the other hand, requires persuasion. Often it requires that the audience become convinced of a problem and see that it is treatable. For example, no mother wants to see her baby weaken and die from dehydration. However, many mothers in the Third World are fatalistic about the problem, believing that they have no options. They may not know the symptoms of dehydration or the ORT treatment that would provide almost immediate relief to their child.

Further, they may have little idea of the environmental conditions that cause the infection in the first place. The nature of the message is a mix of informative and motivational which is the type of message that graphic literature delivers well.

The photonovel that follows was developed in Honduras by PROMCOMSI (Proyecto de Medios de Comunicacion Masiva Aplicada a la Salud Infantil) and the Academy for Educational Development for USAID and the Honduran Ministry of Health. It explores the problem of dehydration. First, the audience is introduced to the characters appearing in the fotonovela.



Mario



Juana, la mamá
de Mario.



Estela, la hermana
de Mario.



Don Isidro, el Guardián
de Salud.

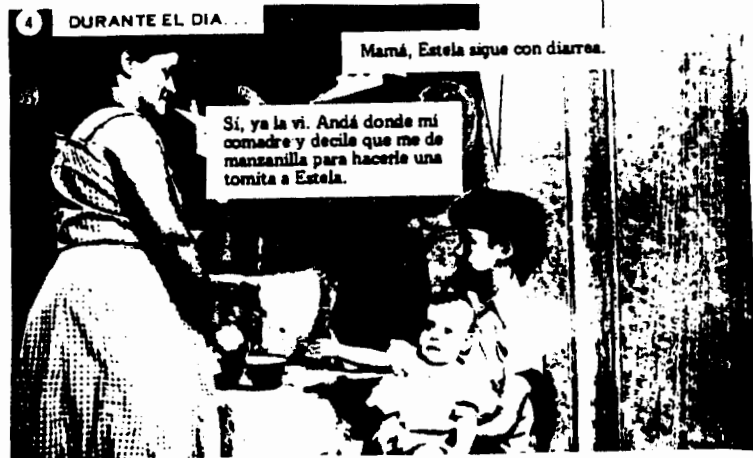


Srita. Enfermera,
La auxiliar
de Enfermería.



El papá de Mario.

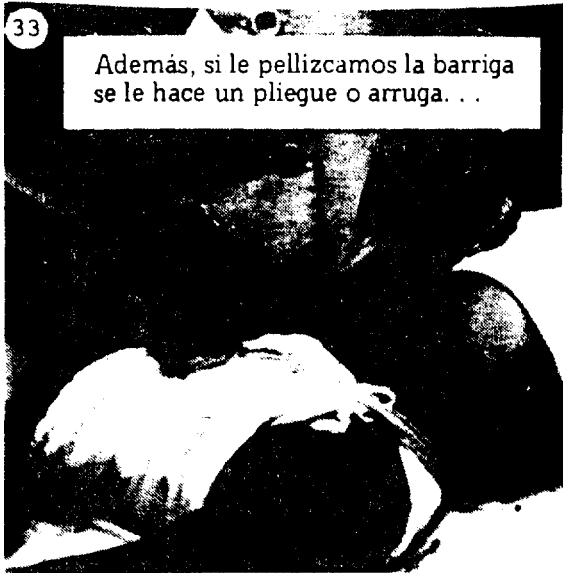
Using a story format, the reader follows Mario, a young boy concerned about his sister's health.



The establishing shot shows the reader that this is Honduras. Another picture is of Mario with his mother. They both are worried. They set out for the clinic...



and the baby is diagnosed
as being dehydrated.



Littrosol is recommended...



and demonstrated.



the symptoms are clearly shown to the reader...

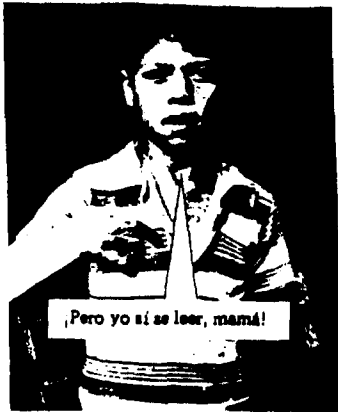


The mother is given the packet.

But she can't read.



Mario can.



Mario has saved his sister!



This story format has managed to explain an extraordinary positive message and moves the reader to see the benefits of using Litrosol. The message is both informational and motivational.

For an Audience with Low Literacy Skills

Communicators often work with an audience that has a low level of literacy skill. Graphic Literature has been effective with this audience because the drawings or photographs help them interpret the message and the sequencing helps them remember steps to be taken.

Below is a comic book that uses drawings and sequencing to inform the audience and remind them of steps to be taken. The comic book is a product of the goiter control program now underway in Pakistan. Both the Ministry of Health and the Aga Khan Central Health Board identified a serious problem of goiter among the people of Northern Pakistan. Together they began a campaign to control and prevent goiter. The program was soon extended to other regions at the request of the Minister of Health.

The project goal was twofold: to encourage the public to take iodized oil capsules and to promote the use of iodized salt, eliminating the use of rock salt. The first stage of the project, a crash program presenting the message and providing iodized oil capsules, was delivered by a mix of three techniques: a traveling sound team using a loud speaker, a one-page handout, and posters.

This handout was given to people by a Lady Health Visitor, a staff member with the Aga Khan Central Health Board. The face-to-face sessions stressed the importance of taking the iodized oil capsules. The Lady Health Visitor presented the illustrations and explained that goiter can cause mental retardation and reduce growth and energy of those affected by it.

پہنے گاؤں کے ٹکڑے سے کپائیے
آلودہ تیل کی ایک ہی خوراک سے ٹکڑے کی دھک تمام کیجئے



ٹکڑے سے نجات کا پروگرام

آغا خان ہیلتھ سروسز

Public response to the program of goiter control was extremely positive. But the follow-up materials required a different approach as the message stressed changing behavior. The graphic literature chosen was a sequenced comic booklet. A flip chart and audio tape were also developed.

The booklet and flip chart chronicle the story of Hur Bibi, who has had goiter since childhood and is now pregnant, and the work of Rabia, a Lady Health Visitor.

Rabia explains goiter to Hur Bibi's family.

Children with goiter lack the energy to play or concentrate in school.

گٹھڑ نہ صرف بد صورتی کا باعث ہے بلکہ اس سے بچے کی نشوونما بھی متاثر ہوتی ہے۔

تندرست بچے قدرتی طور پر روزمرہ کے کاموں اور کھیل کود میں بھرپور حصہ لیتے ہیں۔ گٹھڑ والے بچے سست ہوتے ہیں اور روزمرہ کے کام اور کھیل کود میں دلچسپی نہیں لیتے۔



Rabia says goiter during pregnancy can result in abnormal children like Hur Bibi's son.

ایک حاملہ عورت کا بچہ بڑھاپے میں وہ بچہ کو جنم دے سکتا ہے جو ذہنی اعتبار سے کمزور رہے اور گتھ بڑھے۔

Rabia talked to the officials and was permitted to give a talk under the Chinar tree.

ایک خاتون کی گفتگو کا سبب ہے اور اس نے وہاں آنسو دیا جس سے سب خوش ہوئے۔
کی غذا میں آوہا میں نمک استعمال کر کے بچے کا ذہن کو گتھ سے بہت دھبیے۔

Families went to the Aga Khan Health Center.

گتھ بڑھانے والے بچے اسٹیشن پر آئے کہ ہر فرد اس پر درگاہ میں ہر روز جاتا ہے۔
گتھ بڑھانے والے بچے۔ بڑھاپے میں وہ بچہ کو جنم دے سکتا ہے جو ذہنی اعتبار سے کمزور رہے اور گتھ بڑھے۔



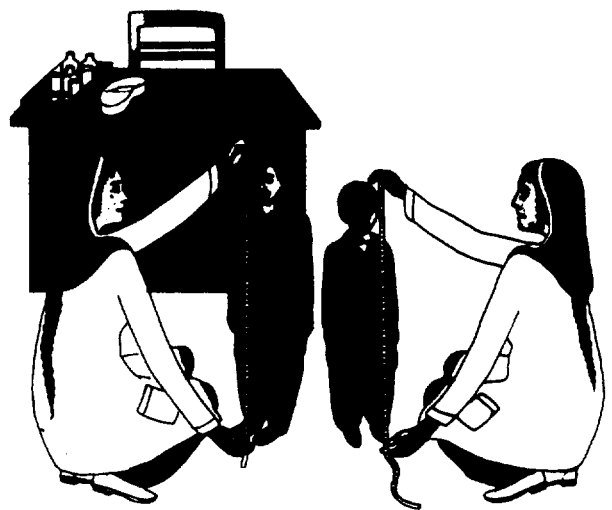
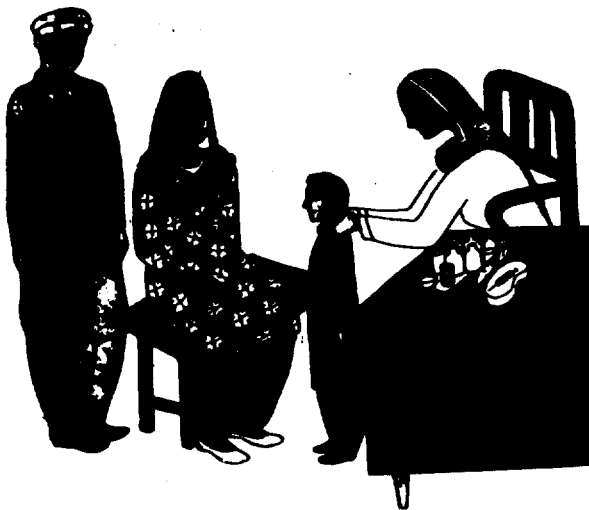
Rabia checks Hamid and his family for goiter.



Rabia shows Hur Bibi that Sohail, their neighbor's child, does not have goiter, but her child, Hamid does.



Sohail and Hamid are the same age, not the same size.



Rabia explains that
Sohail's family uses
iodized salt.



Rabia convinces the parents to
use iodized salt.



The merchant extends
his support to the
program and will not
stock rock salt.

Sohail's family uses iodized salt
for their meals.

ایک ماں فرستے یہ تسلیم کرتی ہے کہ آیوڈین نمک کا روزانہ استعمال اس کے خاندان
کو گھٹے سے محفوظ رکھے گا۔

ہیشہ آیوڈین نمک استعمال کیے، پہاڑی نمک ترک کیے۔ اپنے دکاندار کی حوصلہ افزائی کیے کہ
وہ صرف آیوڈین نمک فروخت کرے۔



Iodized salt will produce
healthy, active and intelligent
children.

ایسے نوزائیدہ بچے جو صحیح نشوونما پا کر تندرست، چمٹ اور ہوشیار ہوں۔

آیوڈین نمک ہر ایک کیلئے مفید ہے حاملہ مائیں جو گھومنا کھانا نہیں ہوتیں ان کے بچے صحت مند
پیدا ہوتے ہیں۔



The pamphlet, developed by a local artist, uses bright colors, details of the local landscape, indigenous farming practices, animals, food, and even common body positions. It speaks directly to the intended population. It stresses the use of iodized salt by comparing two families -- illustrating the cause and effect of adopting the behavior or not.

Presenting a Complex Message

When a message has as its goal a change of attitude or behavior, the audience often needs some exploration of the psychological aspects of the message before they can commit to an action. Responsible parenthood messages are good examples of the treatment technical information often needs. The issue is rarely one of how to take pills, or how to arrange a vasectomy; but, rather, whether to control the number of children entering a family and disappoint grandparents, whether to chance having a promiscuous wife who will be sexually freed by contraception, or whether to chance weakening the male by the strange operation which may have even stranger side effects. Photonovels and dramatic comic books are used extensively by family planning projects around the world for this very reason: the emotional issues can be explored through the storyline.

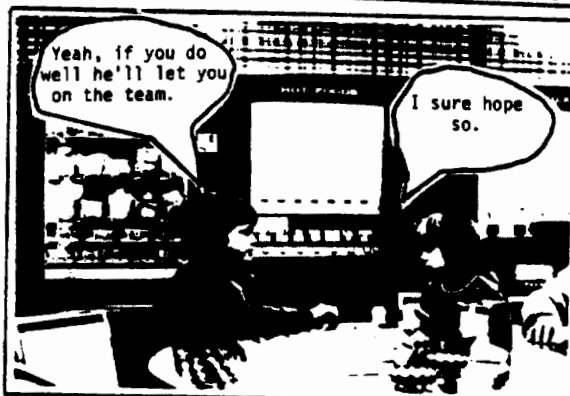
Photonovels and comic books have been used to promote breastfeeding and encourage change in weaning foods; encourage legal action to protect water rights; discuss alcohol and drug abuse and its impact on the family; address concerns of adolescent cystic fibrosis patients as they attend public school; organize communities for rodent control; and fight asbestosis in the building trades. The examples that follow illustrate the variety of complex messages that have been presented in graphic literature.

The photonovel below encourages the understanding of water rights and deals with the audience's feeling of helplessness -- "El Agua que no Pueda Beber," Ministry of Education, Ecuador and the University of Massachusetts.



"Living with Cystic Fibrosis" (Cone, E., and Schwartz, R., Baystate Medical Center, Springfield Mass., 1979) treats ways patients feel as they are integrated into a public school.

Scott, an eighth grader with cystic fibrosis is trying out for the basketball team at school today, and that's all he can think about.



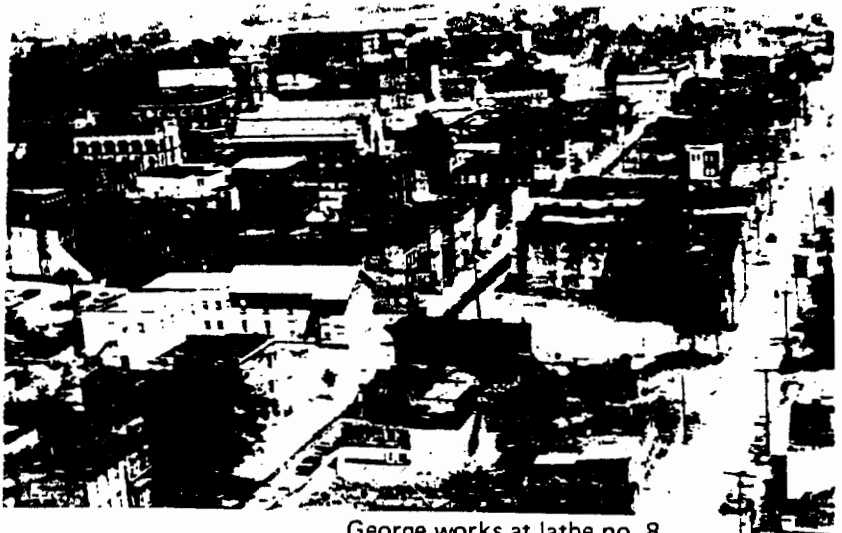
Finally school's over and it's time

"A Working Neighborhood...What does it take?" (Frantz, S. C., Comings, J.P. and Cain, B.J., New York Department of Health, 1978.) treats the tensions that have to be dealt with before community groups can take action.

A WORKING NEIGHBORHOOD:

What does it take?

JAMES AND GEORGE LIVE IN
THE CITY OF TROY, THEY'RE
NEIGHBORS. THEY ALSO WORK
AT THE SAME FACTORY, AND
STARTED ABOUT THE SAME TIME



James works at lathe no. 7

George works at lathe no. 8

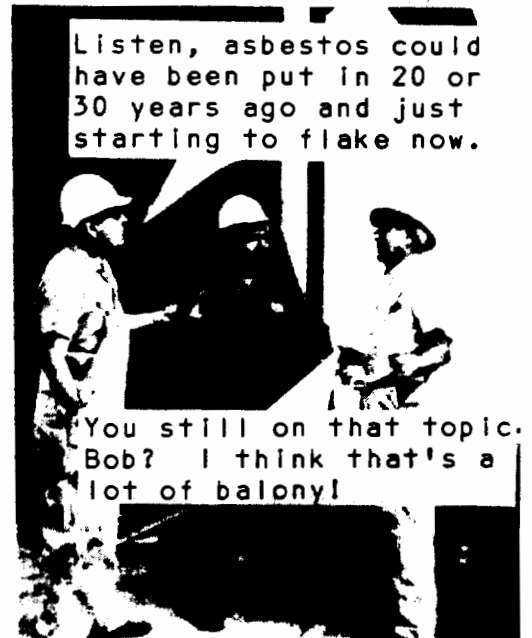


At change of shift one day, a lay-off
notice is posted.

The workers begin talking about who
might get laid off.



"Workers Take Action" (Roter, Debra, Rima Rudd, James P. Keogh and Betty Robinson, Division of Occupational Medicine, Baltimore City Hospitals, Baltimore, Maryland, 1983) treats workers reactions to finding out that they have a life-threatening disease -- Asbestosis.



The photonovels and comic books above are strong examples of effective graphic literature. The extra design time, the extra expense is justified because other treatments would not have been as powerful in helping a group or individual recognize the existence of the problem and decide on an action or solution; or reach and aid an audience with low literacy skills; or deliver and explore complex or sensitive messages.

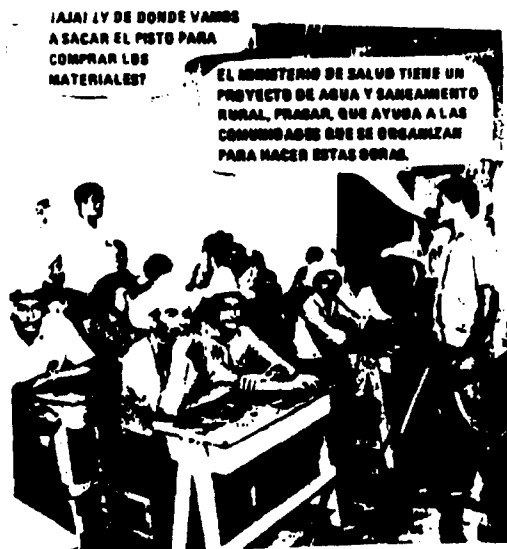
Chapter IV

THE ROLE OF GRAPHIC LITERATURE IN AN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Many of the educational photonovels and comic books reviewed in this book were developed to play a role within a larger instructional program. For example, materials developed for family planning messages are usually distributed through clinics which have nurses, doctors, and health workers who hold instructional sessions or provide individual counseling. Comic books developed on agricultural practices are used in agricultural extension programs, where instructional staff hold sessions in which the messages in the graphic literature are repeated and discussed.

Because the messages delivered from an educational program are often complex, they require repetition to ensure audience retention of the information. The program communicators may decide that the photonovel or comic book is ideal for presentation of the messages but wish to use a variety of different media to aid in repetition. The photonovel or comic book might be used by an instructor in class sessions or read alone.

This chapter illustrates how graphic literature has been integrated into larger educational programs. The Honduran Water and Sanitation Project (PRASAR) will be used as an example of how to use the strength of graphic literature to maximum advantage.



Hey! and where are we going to get enough money to buy the materials?

The Ministry of Health has a rural water and sanitation project, PRASAR, that helps communities that have organized themselves to do this kind of work!

The drama is built around a community organizing to improve its water source. The community builds latrines and a covered communal well to protect the water supply.

The Honduras Rural Water and Sanitation Project, PRASAR, supports the program of a development institution, the Honduran Ministry of Health. The communicators developed their materials considering how best to achieve the goals of the Government and the Ministry, and the needs of the audience.

There is a supportive environment for the program. Improved child survival is a major goal for the people of Honduras. The Ministry of Health, in combination with other public and private agencies, broadcasts radio campaigns on breastfeeding, ORT (rehydration therapy for children dying from diarrhea) and related sanitation practices. Well babies and a well family are ideals for the communities involved.

There is a clear programmatic role for the project and the project's educational message. The Department of Sanitation of the Ministry of Health has been constructing water and waste disposal systems since the 1970s. Often, however, the rural people have not understood the upkeep and use of the systems and have continued drinking contaminated river water and defecating in the open fields. This perpetuates the contamination cycle. The beneficiaries of the program need to change their behavior toward water and sanitation. This project is designed to educate about this need.

The project's goal is to achieve behavioral change, and the desired behavior is clearly defined. Evaluation methods have been developed to detect whether the rural population did change their behavior. The behavioral objectives are:

- o rural communities will organize to construct latrines, pipe systems and covered wells,
- o families will protect their drinking water by covering all water storage containers,
- o families will use a ladle to get water out of the storage containers,
- o communities will keep the latrines and surrounding areas free of debris, bushes and animals, and
- o families will pay their quota for maintenance of aqueducts.

The message, the intended behaviors, are clearly stated.

A multi-media, integrated approach is employed. The message is presented through several channels simultaneously:

- o health promoters work face-to-face with the audience using flipcharts, wall charts and cassette recordings; and
- o mass media in the form of photonovels, comics, radio soap operas, radio spots and posters popularize the educational messages.

The messages are, therefore, presented in a variety of ways. This repetition is key to retention of the message and to changes in behavior.

There is a clear rationale for choice of comic books, photonovels and flipcharts. Flipcharts and wallcharts are used effectively with community groups to stimulate assessment of community needs. Photonovels, radio soap operas, radio spots and posters capture the attention of the adult population and increase their receptivity to the messages presented by the health promoters. Comic books are very popular with school-age children and provide rural school students with basic information about water and sanitation that they share with their families. Each part of the media treatment is acceptable, comfortable and attractive, and in some cases exciting, to the audience.

The following are three examples of the materials used in the PRASAR program. Por el Bienestar de Todos, the photonovel developed by PRASAR, talks about and restates the educational messages delivered by the Project while presenting its own theme of the power of community organization.

In this photonovel Juancito and his father go to round up their cows and find them mucking up the uncovered community well. Other animals, as well as humans, defecate in the hills above the well.



Lolita, Juancito's sister, comes to the well to draw the family's drinking water. The baby of the family is already showing the effects of drinking the contaminated water and has had several days of diarrhea. The mother takes the baby to the clinic where the nurse explains how to treat extreme diarrhea and that the illness is caused by drinking contaminated water. The water, she explains, is most dangerous during rainy season because fecal matter washes down the mountain into the well.

Juancito brings home a comic book from his school called Juanita y La Gotita (Jane and the Drop of Water) which again tells the story of water borne diseases. The father listens to his son's story and then talks about the radio program, Frijol El Terrible, he has just heard which had a sub-theme of the connection of water and health and how PRASAR can help groups of people who want to help themselves. He says, "This Frijol El Terrible teaches important things about health between many jokes."



Juancito's father organizes a community meeting to which he invites a community developer from PRASAR, who uses a set of posters to lead the discussion.



The men organize, get help from PRASAR, cover the well and install a pump. The water comes out clean; the baby stays healthy, and the community is very proud.

The photostory integrates the educational messages of the project into one pamphlet that the family can keep and read over and over again. As is portrayed in the photostory itself, most rural families have at least one

reading member, even if he is a fourth grader. The comic book series, Juanita y La Gotita delivers health messages to school children, covering such topics as boiling water, storage and use of water, reforestation and the need for latrines.



In the sequence above, the water drop is explaining to Juanita that he can make people sick if he is not boiled. The comic books, averaging 8 pages, contain a glossary to define new words and a questionnaire for the children. A teacher's guide illustrates how to use the comics in a classroom.

Posters or preprinted flipcharts are used in the program to:

- o stimulate discussion around the theme depicted;
and
- o illustrate how to do something.

The poster below is used by PRASAR to illustrate the construction of a latrine.

CONSTRUYENDO UNA VIDA MEJOR



MINISTERIO DE SALUD PUBLICA
PRASAR - COMUNIDAD - SANAA - MSP - AID
PREPARADO POR EL SUB-PROYECTO DE EDUCACION PARA LA SALUD

In a number of countries graphic literature has been used in support of larger programs. Photonovels and comic books have worked well as an instructional aid in formal schools and nonformal education programs. These programs are taught by instructors that hold class regularly and, thus, provide the distribution channel for the photonovel or comic book.

Graphic literature has also been used extensively in adult literacy and second language programs. The combination of pictures and words permit learners to graduate rapidly to reading about adult subjects while their command of written language would have kept them reading uninteresting or childish material.

Below is an example from the Nepal National Literacy Program. The story is about a man who drinks, gambles and treats his wife badly, spending her money and getting in fights with her. She leaves him, but he follows to ask her forgiveness. The story ends with the wife deciding whether or not to return.



The story is not brought to a conclusion and the literacy class discusses what they would do in this situation. This always leads to a lively discussion, a discussion that reinforces the enjoyment of reading.

The Department of Nonformal Education in Indonesia developed the photonovel below to present development messages defined by one community in South Sulewesi. Every two to four pages a new problem and solution is presented by the introduction of new characters and their problems. On this page, the family is being told that their son, who fell in the school yard, has a concussion and must go to the hospital. The family has no money is very concerned. A discussion of a need for the community to repair the school yard results.

PAK MANTERI DAN GURU BERADA DI KAMAR SUARDI.





Graphic literature has a strong role to play in educational programming. Graphic literature can present multiple messages within a context that models the real life of the reader. The entire program effort can, therefore, be integrated into one material. This material, if done well, will carry its own motivation for hearing the message, entertainment. Since the material is in a written form, the target audience can refer back to it often. The entertainment value of the material ensures that it will still be around to be referred to and that it will be remembered when the subject of the message occurs in conversation.

Frequently, the message must be shared and discussed among members of a community, between children and adults, between extensionists and villagers. Though a variety of media can be used to disseminate any single message, graphic literature is uniquely capable of integrating the messages, illustrating the behaviors and facilitating repeated discussion -- an important role to be played in any educational program.

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CHAPTER V

MARKET RESEARCH: SEARCHING FOR THE MOTIVATIONAL KEY

Educational photonovels and comic books must do more than entertain. They must motivate the intended audience to take the prescribed action. Believable, attractive and sympathetic characters; well-designed drawings and photographs that support and interpret the written text; gripping, involving plots; and finely crafted educational messages -- these are the elements of effective educational graphic literature that make it a strong motivational media. The educator needs a tool to determine if the graphic literature he designs produces the motivation needed.

Market research helps the educator to predict impact: what the audience will do as a result of reading, viewing or hearing the educational message. The educator needs to know that the teenage readers will understand contraception and use it if they are sexually active. Or that a worker will understand the safety precautions needed and wear safety glasses or protective clothing.

Graphic literature has the potential of being strong motivational media, but it also poses a challenge for market research because multiple elements contribute to its impact -- the graphic rendering, the characterization, the plot, and the message. The communicator needs to know what information will be retained and what actions will be taken as a result of the message as it is packaged.

The information required for market research is:

AUDIENCE: Who is it who will receive the message?

**WHAT IS THE NATURE OF
WHAT YOU WANT THEM TO DO:** How complex or difficult is the task?

**HOW DO THEY PERCEIVE AND
INTERPRET THE MESSAGE:** What did they see and understand?

**WHAT IS THE BEHAVIORAL
IMPACT:** What will they do as a result of the media?

The Audience: Who Are You Talking To?

Knowledge of the audience is the beginning point of a communication strategy and paramount to achieving any educational goal. The communicator must be able to answer the question, "Who are we selling this message to?" Sometimes the answer is easy -- for example, middle-aged, middle-class women with strong reading habits who have lived in a community for at least ten years. Unfortunately educational messages usually go to a more complex audience. For example, the educational communicator working in a developing country usually works with a poor, educationally-disadvantaged audience -- e.g., women from 15-55 living in rural communities from four ethnic groups. Usually, information about this audience is scarce. Their experience with graphic materials is not predictable and their cultural tastes vary between communities, ethnic groups, and generations. Women from one of the ethnic groups may be functionally literate while women of another group may be forbidden to read because of a religious sanction.

It is highly probable that multiple group segments are found within this audience. In other words, sub-groups may exist with differences so great that the communicator might consider separate communication strategies for each group.

This audience complexity has led communicators to look to market research to increase their knowledge of the individuals and groups they intend to reach. Numerous procedures, especially for use in foreign cultures, have been developed to help the communicator increase his knowledge of an audience and better predict the impact of the graphic material.

Pretesting Graphics in a Foreign Culture

Pretesting is critical, especially with groups that don't have predictable literacy skills. Audience reaction to both the actual drawings or photographs and the sequence in which they are displayed must be tested. In some situations, pretesting the graphic rendering illustrates that the sophisticated comic book format would not be effective because of the target group's limited exposure to print media. The pretest of the graphic becomes the basic, possibly the only, procedure in the market research. A great deal has been written about pretesting the graphic rendering and the interested reader can refer to these texts for a complete discussion. (See the end of this chapter for references.)

Communication through graphic media is culturally sensitive even in a media-rich environment. The communicator who is working in a culture other than his own has numerous elements to monitor for audience reaction. For example, too often the message has not been received because the graphic rendering, the actual drawing or photograph, has not been understood. The literature is full of stories about communicators that used magnified close-ups of flies without thinking that the viewers had never seen anything magnified before. The audience thinks that it is seeing giant, other worldly animals, not flies. They react to the sensational and don't understand the educational message about flies and sanitation. Others have depicted a pregnant woman as a very young girl. No one believes that the message is serious because such a child could not be married. Clearly, no assumptions should be made about what the audience is seeing.

Minimally, the audience should see the picture as the communicator intended. Ideally, the audience will be intrigued by and accepting of the picture. For example, a communicator developing a graphic message about the need to keep the family compound clean of fecal contamination has to first determine that each depiction in the graphic is seen as intended. If the graphic contains a drawing or photograph of a 2 year old horse standing close to a water source, he needs to know that his audience sees a two year old horse. In this example, the graphic composition needs to be pretested as well. The audience needs to see that the horse is being permitted to be close to the family drinking source, so the spatial relationship has to be clear. If the audience sees the visual rendering correctly, the educator has a graphic that can be effective in discussing sources of drinking water contamination.

The cultural connotation of the graphic presentation and plot must be tested. In the example given above, the audience might possibly see more than a horse standing near a water source. For instance, it could see the yard of a humble country family living in poverty or it could see the yard of a family richer than themselves. Often the audience needs to see people who behave and look like themselves in order to see the message as relevant. For example, in the pamphlet illustrated below, the communicator pretested the sequenced drawings to insure that audience saw a woman dressed as they would dress, with realistic furnishings in her bedroom.



Seeing the graphic as the artist intended is a step in understanding the message of the graphic. On the page above (from a pamphlet developed by the Overseas Development Administration of the UK and PIACT with the Bangladesh Social Marketing Project), the pretest (focus group) audience saw the lantern and understood that it was night. They saw the woman taking a pill from the sequenced pill pack. In the second and third frame, they saw it was again night and that the second and third pill had been taken. The audience understood the graphics to say that two days had elapsed and that two pills had been taken. Words at the bottom of the page explain about taking the pill at the same time each night so that it will not be forgotten. A study of audience reaction found that they were able to understand the meaning of the sequenced pictures. There was "...increased knowledge of correct pill use", 78% of the women had kept the pamphlet and 89% had found someone to read the text. (Reported by PSC Packet 1, Johns Hopkins Population Center.)

The sequenced drawings above illustrate how a communicator took pretested photographs and a minimal plot and structured an educational message which was well-retained (as illustrated by the study on audience reaction). The hard question remains -- what did the audience do as a result of their new information?

The Instructional Message: What are You Asking Them To Do?

The message must outline action that can be done by and is desirable to the audience. The developers of the pamphlet above are urging the use of oral contraceptives and have dedicated several pages to explaining how to take the pill correctly. Use of this pamphlet with a group of women explicitly prohibited from practicing family planning by influential political or religious leaders who have banned the sale of contraceptives would be a frustrating, ill-conceived educational effort.

Developing the effective instructional message is an exercise that again leads back to the audience. Who are they? What can they do to solve the identified problem? What solutions cost them too much? The communicator needs to know exactly what is being asked of the audience. Does the audience see the problem as defined by the communicator as a problem for them? Is what is being asked counter intuitive or counter to traditional practices? The communicator needs to know:

- o the audience's awareness and explanation of the causes of the problem discussed,
- o the audience's understanding and interpretation of the proposed solution of the problem, and
- o the costs to the audience of taking the prescribed actions.

If there is a product purchase or service being proposed, the educator needs to know:

- o the possibility of misuse or abuse of the product/service, and
- o the probability that the product/service will be correctly utilized.

The oral rehydration campaigns described in Chapter III are examples of communicators examining a problem (infant illness and mortality from extreme cases of diarrhea in that case) and developing solutions that are possible for the audience. The PRASAR project in Honduras identified the problem (infant death from diarrhea), the cause (contaminated water), a community action method for containing the problem (covered wells for the community drinking source), and a treatment (a prepackaged salt/sugar solution mixed at home) for immediate relief from the life-threatening symptoms of diarrhea. In another example, The Gambia litrosol project prescribed a home-mixed salt/sugar solution and taught how to use bottles and bottle caps found in the home for measuring and mixing the solution correctly. Both projects are able to report that there is substantial use of the salt/sugar solution and a decrease in infant death.

The following is another example that provides specific objectives for market research. The creation of a "broadcast environment" -- a condition in which the community is talking about the problem and possibly about solutions -- requires extensive educational promotion. For instance, the Lesotho Distance Teaching Centre (LDTC) reports in "The Use of Photo-strips in Family Planning Education," (LDTC, mimeograph, 1980) that their photo-pamphlets "Thabos's Homecoming," "Matseliso's Wedding," and "Weaning, Child Spacing and Family Planning" were introduced in an environment in which only 24% of the target population had heard about family planning. Most did not know what condoms, IUDs or birth control pills were. The LDTC's educational goal was to start a dialogue with the community members having accurate recall of the information.

The LDTC did market research for the following elements:

- o comprehension of the story, the written text and the photographs;
- o whether the audience could relate the messages to their own lives;
- o the amount of conversation the photo stories caused;
- o whether the presentations caused offense to the audiences and what was the general attitude toward the photo strips; and
- o the level of retention of the messages and technical information.

**How Does the Audience Experience the Message:
Emotional Identification, Believability and Persuasiveness.**

Communicators promoting new social practices and products must consider the emotions of the audience as well as the "facts" of the educator. It is easy to believe strongly in the rightness of the message and to assume that if the message is presented clearly the audience will understand the logic, take the prescribed action and lives will be saved. However, often the real job is getting the message out in a persuasive way.

There are many ways to present the same message. Packaging the message so that the audience can deal with their emotions around the subject is extremely important since audience reaction can determine the level of acceptance of the message. Market research on audience response is critical. As is reported in Pretesting and Revising Instructional Materials for Water Supply and Sanitation (WASH Technical Report #24, 1985), achieving identifiability, readability, perceivability is only the first step of "entering the gateway" of communication. The authors state, "To stop here and not follow up with more important questions precludes changing attitudes and behavior -- the ultimate objective of most educational activities. The ability to identify what is seen is not enough. Members of the intended audience also must believe what they see, value what they see, and be persuaded by what they see. Only then will attitudes and behavior change."

Persuasion is the major concern of advertisers. Thus, it is not surprising to find that emotions are often the starting point for message development. Tony Schwartz, author of The Responsive Chord and architect of advertising and social marketing campaigns, reverses the traditional communications process. He looks at the desired feeling to be elicited from the audience and then considers the message. The message is not a secondary consideration, but it is clear that the message can be packaged in a variety of ways, some of which will be more appealing and persuasive. Mr. Schwartz states that in seeking a "responsive chord," a common, almost irresistible response comes from deep within the individual, a resonance. The communicator must first understand "...how stored experiences are patterned in our brain, and how previous experiences condition us to perceive new stimuli. Second, we must understand the characteristics of...how people use media in their lives." (page 27).

Mr. Schwartz's approach is based on technique. He states:

"Thus when I was asked by the American Cancer Society back in the sixties to create a TV spot that would encourage people to give up smoking, I did not ask, 'What can I say to convince people to stop smoking?' Rather, I attempted to evoke feelings based on a listener-viewer's experience that might lead to the desired change in behavior, given the likely context in which my stimuli would have been seen and heard. The spot I designed shows two children dressing up in their parents' clothes. At the end, a voice-over announcer says very calmly, 'Children love to imitate their parents....Children learn from imitating their parents. Do you smoke cigarettes?' The American Cancer Society said it was the most successful spot they ever ran, and they subsequently used the theme in other ads. The antismoking message was not in the words or visual of the commercial, but in the feelings evoked by commercial stimuli."

What Is the Impact of the Message: Market Testing For Persuasiveness

In market testing for persuasiveness, the communicator is looking for evidence that the audience will take the prescribed action. Communicators developing graphic literature must closely monitor emotional impact of the characters, plot, and graphic depictions as well as the message.

Market researchers use survey questionnaires with select audiences, and specific random sample techniques such as the "mall intercept" in which individuals are stopped in shopping areas to be asked questions and observation techniques. These survey and sampling techniques are used to explore audience knowledge and attitudes. The communicator uses the information gathered to design an appropriate message and media treatment. These must then be tested with people representative of the intended audience.

The focus group is a technique used to measure the persuasiveness, emotional identification and believability of the treatment and message. The objectives of a focus group are:

- an exploration of feelings rather than quantitative tabulation of yes-and-no answers to limited questions. A focus group is usually formed with 6-10 people from homogeneous backgrounds or interests. Under the guidance of the moderator, topics related to the subject matter of the research are discussed....The sessions enable the investigators to hear and observe the group's reactions toward the topics...and to gain insight into the participants' knowledge, beliefs, and concerns. ("Print Materials for nonreaders: Experiences in Family Planning and Health," by Margo Zimmerman and Dr. Gordon Perkins)

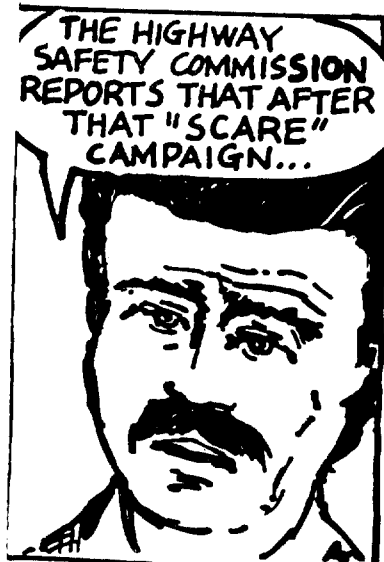
Focus group research requires a precise description of the target audience and its effectiveness is dependent on the observational ability of the researchers as they watch and question a small group with characteristics similar to the target audience. If the target audience is large and diverse, the researcher will need to conduct several focus groups. The episode below is loosely based on the research conducted by the S.W. Morris and Associates social marketing firm as they prepared a poster/brochure campaign. If the materials being developed were comic books -- with plots and characterizations -- the focus group would have been asked to talk about their reactions to the characters, the realism of the plot, etc. However, the exploration of the impact of the materials are similar and give a full example of how focus groups are designed and run.

THE MARKET TEST

MARY AND JOHN ARE ASSIGNED TO THE CAMPAIGN TO INCREASE THE CORRECT USE OF CHILD CAR SAFETY SEATS. THEIR AGENCY'S RESEARCH DEPARTMENT HAS SENT DOWN GRISLY, DEPRESSING REPORTS AND STATISTICS ABOUT CHILD DEATHS IN CAR CRASHES. THEIR JOB IS TO FIND WAYS TO MOTIVATE PARENTS TO USE CHILD CAR SAFETY SEATS CORRECTLY... TO PACKAGE THE MESSAGE TO CAUSE THE RIGHT ACTION...

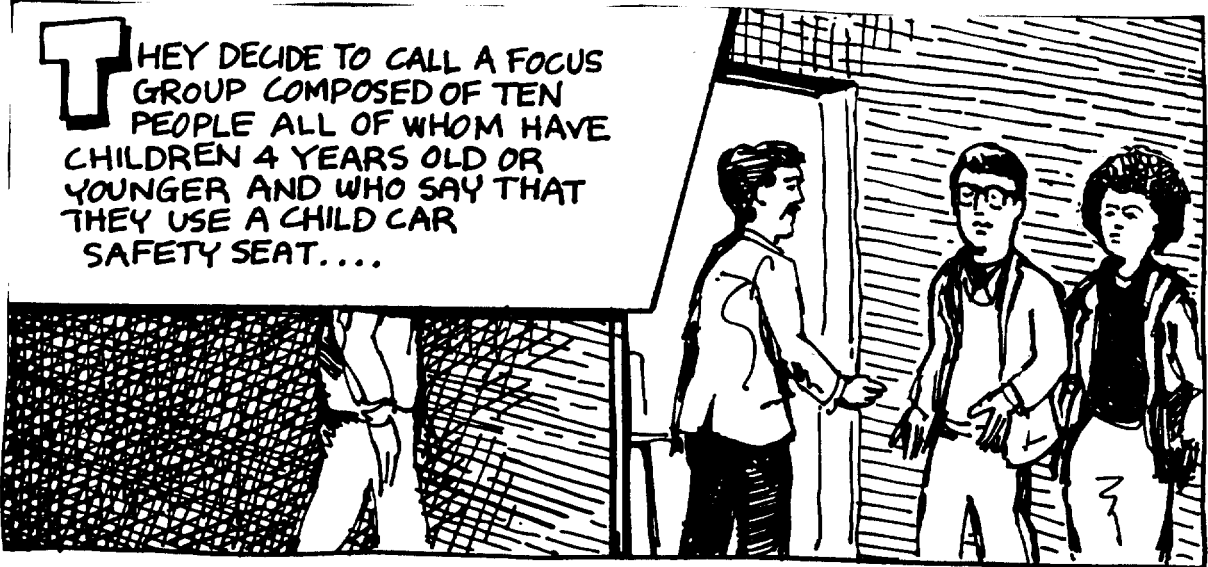


THESE FIGURES
MAKE YOUR
HAIR CURL...
AND PICTURES
ARE HORRIFYING!!



R ESEARCH AND CREATIVE TIME PASSES. JOHN AND MARY DAFT CONCEPTS AND PRESENT THEM TO INDIVIDUAL PARENTS. FINALLY THEY THINK THAT THEY HAVE THREE STRONG CONCEPTS BASED ON THE CARING THEME. BUT... WHICH IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE? THE MOST PERSUASIVE?

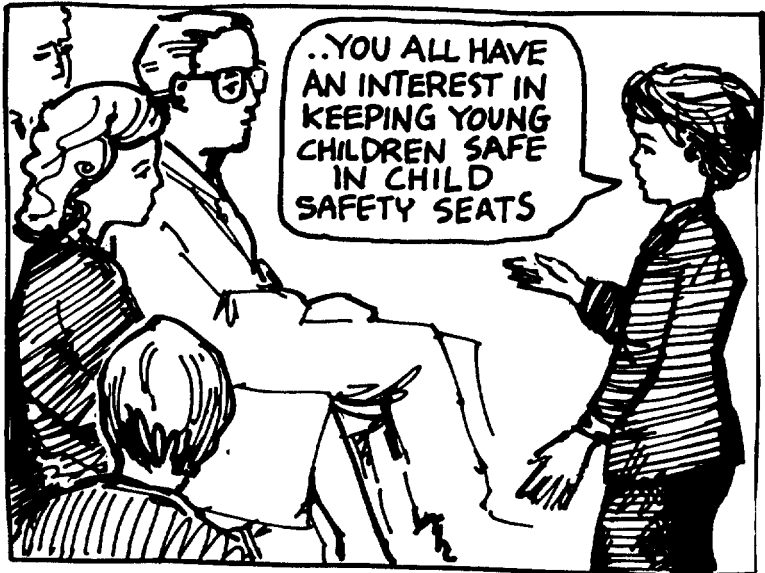
THEY DECIDE TO CALL A FOCUS GROUP COMPOSED OF TEN PEOPLE ALL OF WHOM HAVE CHILDREN 4 YEARS OLD OR YOUNGER AND WHO SAY THAT THEY USE A CHILD CAR SAFETY SEAT....



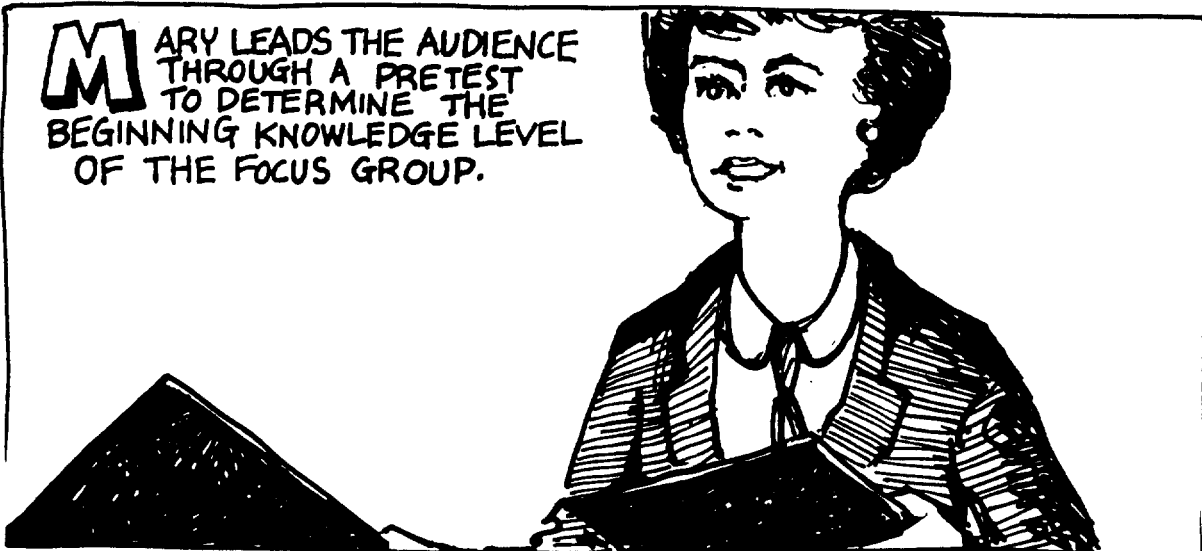
WELCOME TO THE CHILD SAFETY SEAT FOCUS GROUP. YOU WERE CHOSEN BECAUSE...



..YOU ALL HAVE AN INTEREST IN KEEPING YOUNG CHILDREN SAFE IN CHILD SAFETY SEATS



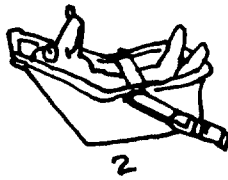
MARY LEADS THE AUDIENCE THROUGH A PRETEST TO DETERMINE THE BEGINNING KNOWLEDGE LEVEL OF THE FOCUS GROUP.



GENERAL KNOWLEDGE OF CHILD SAFETY SEATS

1. Who installed the safety seat in your car.
2. Did the person who installed the safety seat follow the manufacturer's instructions? Were they easy to understand.
3. Who places your child in the safety seat most of the time.

KNOWLEDGE OF CORRECT INSTALLATION AND USE



1. Please state whether the seat is installed properly and the child is secured correctly in each of the five seats.

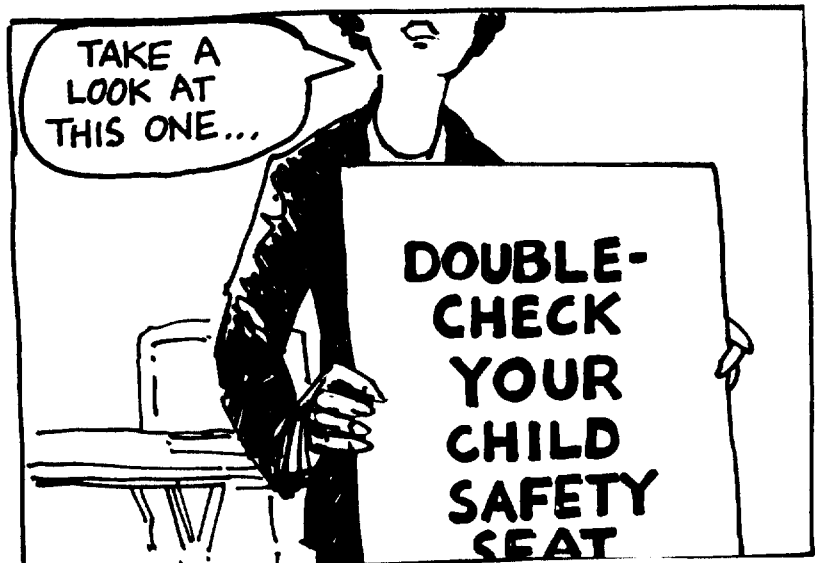
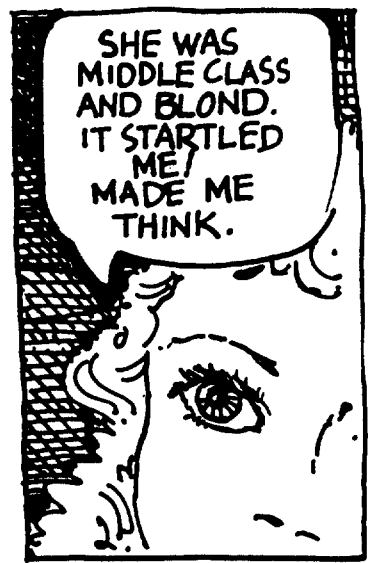
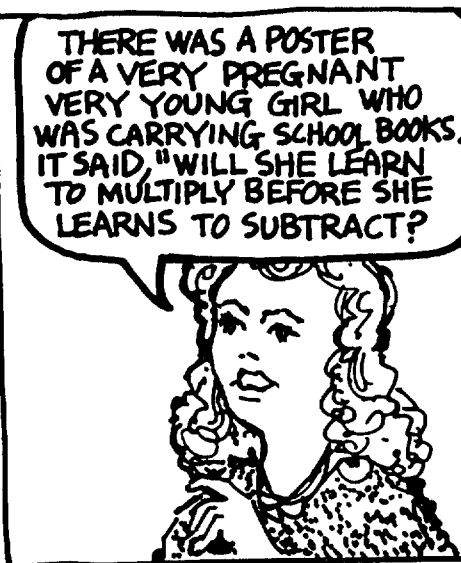
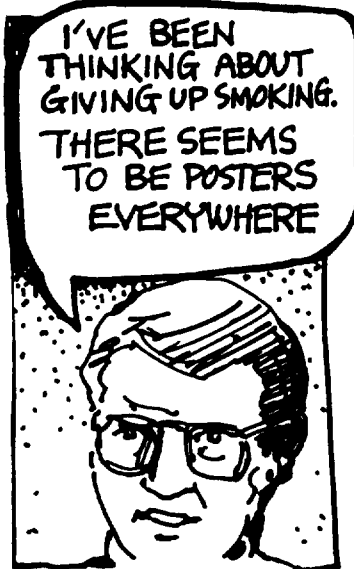
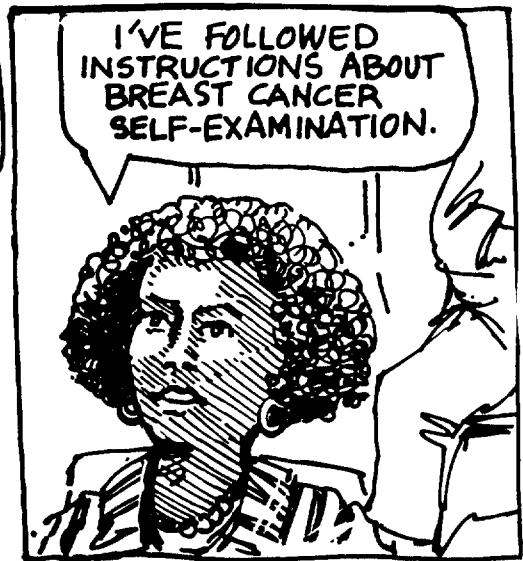
1.
don't

they? seat correctly.

SUGGESTED MOTIVATIONAL THEME

1. What do you think would encourage parents to use safety seats correctly?
(T.V. / Radio? print? brochures?)

THANK YOU
FOR FILLING OUT
THE QUESTIONNAIRE!



WOULD THIS STATEMENT ATTRACT YOUR ATTENTION? MARK YOUR REACTION ON YOUR SCORE SHEET.

TO CH SA

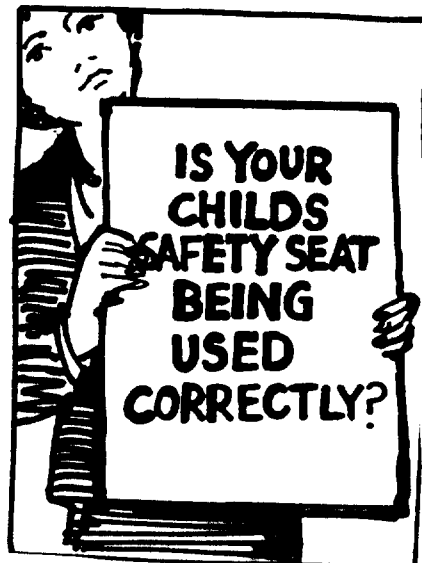
NO ☐ Would this statement attract your attention?

NO ☐ Would you do anything as a result of seeing this statement in a poster?

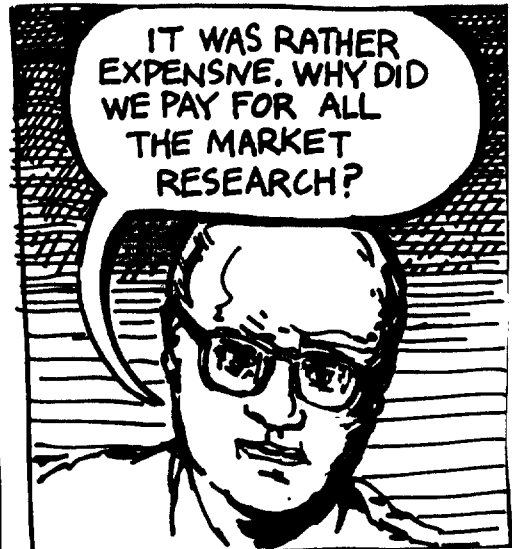
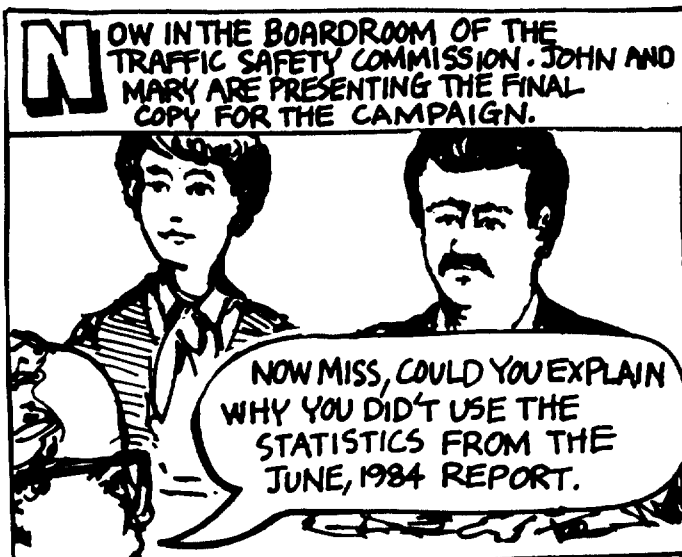
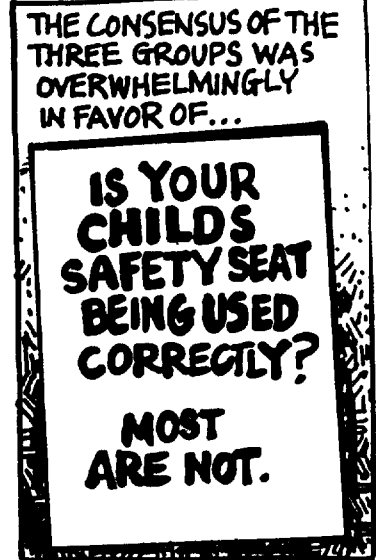
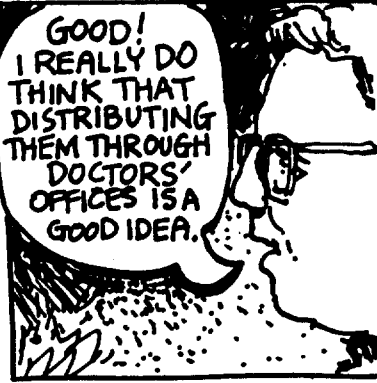
NO ☐ Would it motivate you to pick up an accompanying brochure and read it? (Poster and brochure vs. brochure alone?)

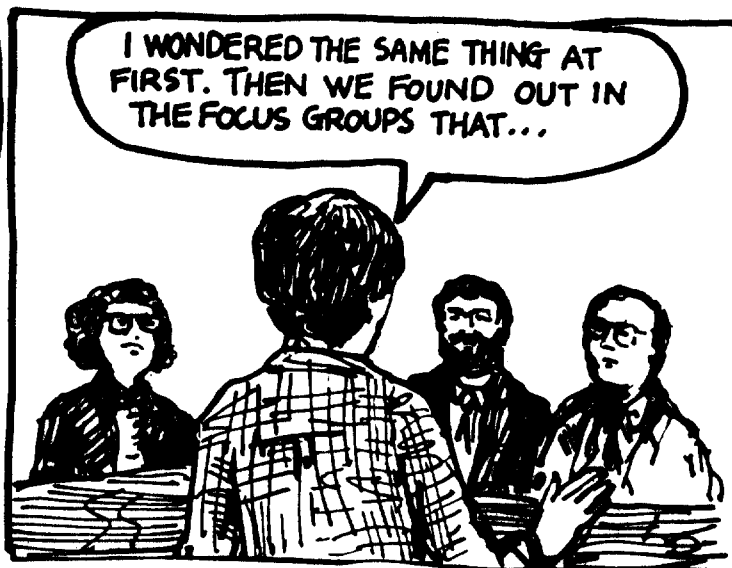
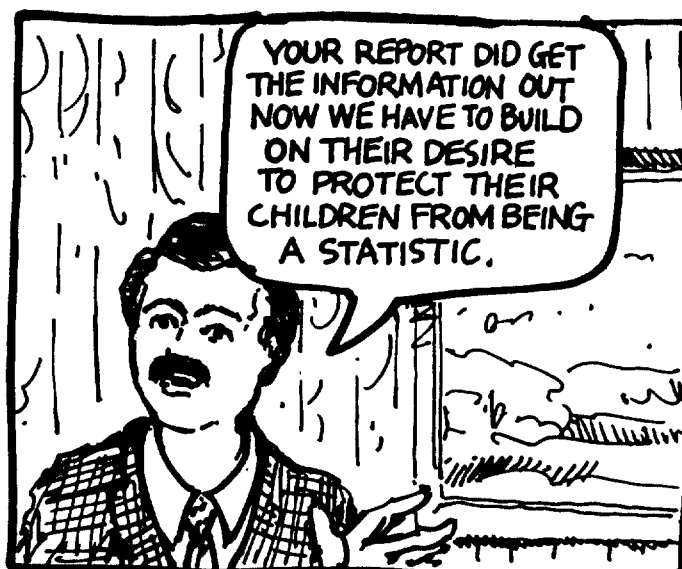
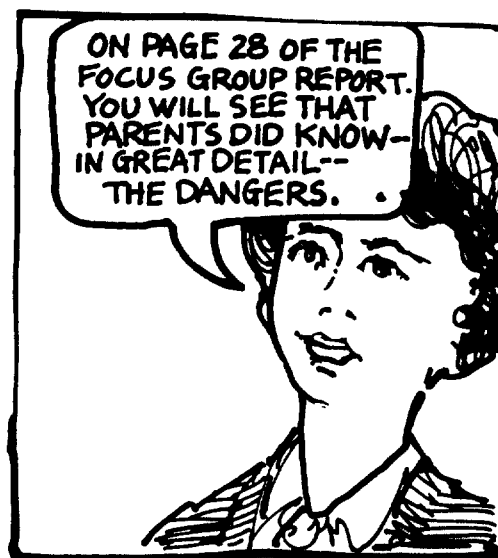
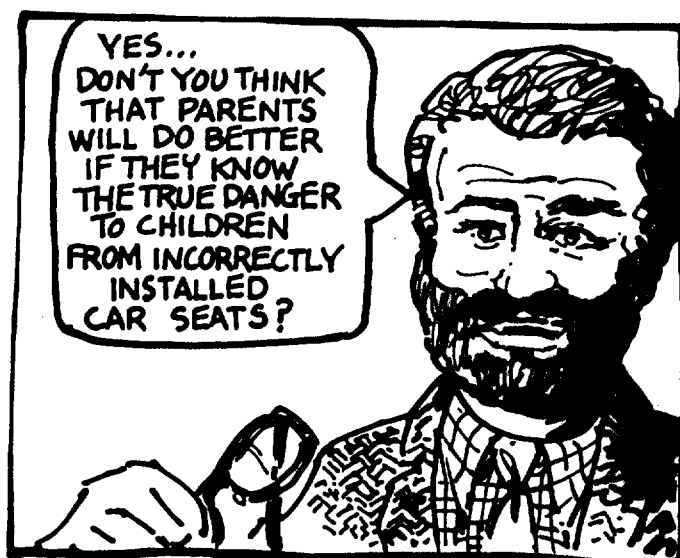
Do you have any suggestions for an approach that you think would be more motivating or create more interest?

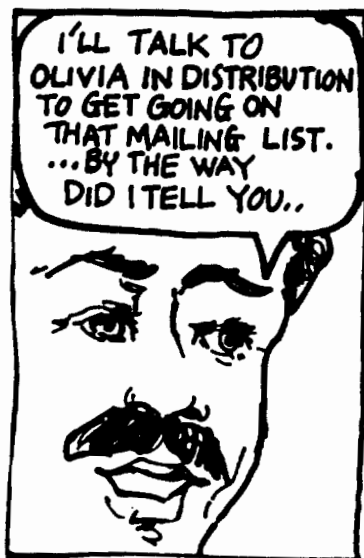
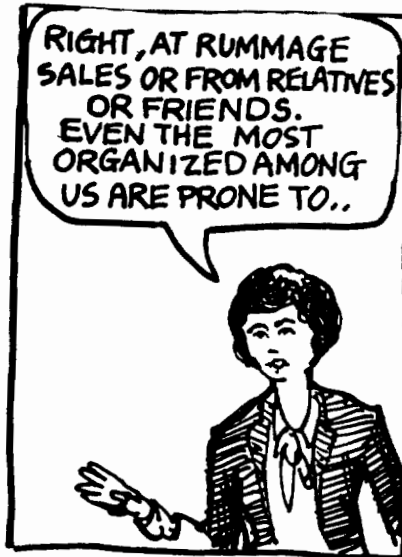
Is there anything missing that attracted you to the other campaign you mentioned?



THE FOCUS GROUP DILIGENTLY EXPRESS THEIR OPINIONS AND FEELINGS ABOUT EACH PRESENTATION. FINALLY THEY TAKE A SHORT POST TEST TO DETERMINE HOW MUCH THEY NOW KNOW ABOUT THE SUBJECT. THEY ARE THANKED AND DISMISSED.....







DOCUMENTS DISCUSSING PRETEST METHODS

A Guide to Basic Print Production, The British council, 10 Spring Gardens, London, SW1A 2BN.

Pretesting Communication for Family Planning Programs, by Iqbal Qureshi and D. Lawrence Kincaid, East West Communications Institute, 1977.

Print Materials for Nonreaders: Experiences in Family Planning and Health, by Margot L. Zimmerman and Gordon W. Perkins, M.D., PIACT Paper Eight, 1255 23rd Street, N.W., Suite 420, Washington, D.C. 20037.

Communicating with Pictures in Nepal, National Development Service and UNICEF, Kathmandu, Nepal, 1975.

Communications Pretesting, by Jane T. Betrand, Media Monograph 6, Communication Laboratory, Community and Family Study Center, University of Chicago, 1979.

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CHAPTER VI

EVALUATING THE COSTS OF GRAPHIC LITERATURE

No choice of media can be judged cost-effective unless it is effective. The fact that they are relatively inexpensive is not the only reason, or necessarily the best reason for considering graphic literature; rather, the best reason is that they are an effective means of delivering persuasive instructional messages. Graphic literature can be effective.

Costs of any educational material are the costs of obtaining services and supplies needed to design and produce the material. In one country, offset printing and paper may be readily available at reasonable prices. In another, there may not be a good, direct supplier of paper and printing costs may be excessive. Affordable graphic artists may be available in one country and nonexistent in another.

Some costs are direct costs of the production. Others are costs of distribution, including presentation by extension personnel. Some costs can be retrieved through advertisement or sales. There is also the possibility of cost reductions based on assumptions of efficiency in the delivery of the service. The hypothetical case study below illustrates the elements of cost.

A Case Study

The populous country of Niverean has seven major ethnic groups, each with a different language. All of the ethnic groups have malaria in their regions. All agree that there is a need for a national educational campaign to treat the problem. An ample budget has been established and qualified instructional media specialists appointed. The need is for universal action to cover or treat mosquito breeding grounds and for increased understanding of how to treat trauma cases of malaria. Malaria will not be eradicated, just controlled. Thus, education must be planned for generations of adults.

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The objectives of this effort are to insure that the families of each region learn about family and community health (Ministry of Health messages), control of malaria (Ministry of Environmental Control) and community organization and adult education (Ministry of Education). The communicators judge that the messages are too complex for broadcast media treatment. The language differences complicate it further. After considerable research and analysis, the campaign directors decide that the most cost effective approach is to produce a series of photonovels built around the lives of the Ranna family. The lessons are to be illustrated as the Ranna family raises children, observes courtships, attends weddings and improves the quality of their lives. Story lines will be developed and messages tailored to the regional and ethnic audiences.

One prototype photographic layout will be prepared for each issue. A media specialist will take this prototype to each ethnic region and take new pictures with an instant camera. Each copy will follow the layout, plot and message of the original. The instant camera pictures will be pasted-up and reproduced using xerox machines. The photonovel will then be bound in a three color glossy cover with public service announcements on the inside cover translated into the appropriate languages. Each region will then distribute the photonovels through a tailored distribution system for their region.

Elements of cost are:

- o Market research on plot, modes of message presentation, clarity of illustrations, distribution systems (short term technical assistance).
- o The costs for salaries for photographers, writers, researchers, xerox operators, transportation and per diem.
- o Printing of covers, xeroxing of regional texts, folding and stapling, photographic equipment such as instant cameras, and paper.
- o Personnel for handling distribution and transport costs.

Elements of economy:

- o Offset printing is very costly in country and paper very difficult to locate; two local businesses are prepared to donate the use of high-speed xerox machines which reproduce photographs well and to provide the paper at cost. They will also provide personnel to run the machines free of charge.

- o The instant cameras cut down the time and delay of development and permit amateur photographers to know if they have the pictures they need.
- o The ministries have agreed to use their existing extension and community education programs to distribute the materials. This avoids any additional cost for field workers and transportation.
- o Multiple ministries are presenting educational messages, thus the costs of the photonovels are shared by several educational efforts.
- o The time spent in market research and testing will result in instructional materials that will be understood without the intervention of extension personnel.
- o The photonovels will have a high "pass along" factor. In other words, the photonovels will be read and shared by families and multiple community members. This contributes both to economies (materials in use for a longer time) and to making the materials attractive to advertisers.

Potential Cost Recovery:

- o The materials will be self explanatory so that extension personnel who are not well trained can use the materials for effective instructional aids. Thus the photonovels will take the place of in-service training for extension workers.
- o Some of the public service announcements will be paid for by other departments and ministries not involved in the malaria campaign.
- o Two businesses, a fertilizer company and a manufacturer of small pumps, have requested advertising space or inserts included with the materials. Other businesses may also be interested.

Given the high cost of paper in Niverean, would radio broadcasts or print advertisements have been a better buy? The question is one of cost efficiency: which medium could achieve the same results at the cheapest price.

Photonovel and comic books have unique cost characteristics that influence the cost decision:

The Pass-Along Factor: The "pass-along factor" is a commercial term for how many people will actually see a magazine or other periodic publication. Magazine publishers often note that the initial purchaser will lend the magazine to a neighbor or possibly put it on display in a beauty shop or doctor's office where many people will read it. A documented high pass-along factor makes the magazine attractive to advertisers who want the greatest circulation possible.

Graphic literature has a high pass-along factor. Descriptive evidence, mostly anecdotal, from communicators show that an audience shares photonovels and comic books with their families and other community members. Commercial photonovels and comic books are resold and used. Photonovel and comic book markets can be found in most countries.

When discussing the printing and distribution costs of photonovels and comic books, the pass-along factor should be considered. Program designers who plan to hand-out 2000 photonovels can easily project that at least two other people will read the copy. Thus the cost per reader should be estimated by the cost of production divided by 6000, not 2000.

Commercial Costs And Educational Costs: Commercial photonovels and comic books are produced cheaply and rapidly. Often the entire production process of a photonovel -- conceptualization, scripting, casting, shooting and editing takes four days (Cornelia Flora Butler). Even at high daily rates for the writers and photographers, the costs are not large. With wide distribution the unit costs of the materials are extremely low -- mere pennies.

Educational photonovels or comic books are developed by researchers and instructional media specialists. Their consulting fees and salaries become a sizable part of the production costs. A full time media developer on a project often will distribute the cost of his salary among the number of productions completed during the year. Obviously, this procedure has a great impact on the cost of the materials. The actual time used by the project team to produce the photonovel or comic book provides a clear assessment of costs.

High End/Low End Production Costs: Production choices influence cost enormously. For example, photonovels can be made with a researcher, ministry personnel, evaluators, pretesters, professional photographers and artists, paid actors and professional writers. They can also be developed by one locally-trained media specialist using an instant camera who writes the story with the audience and pretests at the same time. The latter type of production can be completed in two weeks and is typically printed on newspaper stock, while the former often takes six months and may be printed in three colors on glossy stock.

The more elaborate production may still be the more cost effective if it has a significantly large distribution, is so well designed that readers have fewer questions and take up less time with counselors and is integrated with the other elements of the program to insure impact.

A decision has to be made as to how much improvement of the product is achieved by additional, expensive refinement. Often, the communicator is working on incremental improvements. The material could be well-designed for 70% of the audience and the communicator may still wish to reach more. The last 10-30% may be much more expensive to reach and the communicator should ask whether the incremental costs are worth it. A separate message may be cheaper than the attempt to develop one product for the entire audience.

Cost Effectiveness

The costs of graphic literature are usually higher than other print media because of the drawings and photography. But, graphic literature is usually more effective, particularly with emotional or motivational messages, than printed materials that have no story. A radio novel with a brochure or a series of posters might be comparable. Or, a brochure with a photostrip explained by an extension worker might have comparable impact. If a comparable media treatment can be located, its costs should be compared to that of graphic literature. If no comparable method is located, the costs of the photonovel or comic should be reviewed to determine elements of possible cost savings.

There are four main steps to follow in assessing the costs and developing a plan for using graphic media costeffectively:

First, state objectives as precisely as possible. How many people are to be reached? With how many messages? Is it a one-time effort or an on-going campaign with plans for other media packages? If so, the communicator needs to decide how to distribute costs to each effort.

Second, decide how effective you need to be. What is the minimum impact you will accept as being successful? How will you measure this impact? What are the consequences of reaching less than 100% of the target audience or of some people misinterpreting the message? What costs are you prepared to pay to develop a more complex campaign with higher quality materials or more supporting media. The media treatment is cost effective at any point above the minimum needed to be effective. At the point at which the program managers judge that the program has better uses for its money, it is no longer cost effective to spend more to improve the product.

Third, assess the resources available. The manager should be interested in the net costs to the program. Include staff time, facilities and any contribution in kind as well as cash. Also include any possibilities for cost recovery such as sales of the materials, advertising revenue and grants or contributions which may come as a result of disseminating the materials.

Finally, determine the costs of production, considering factors of scale and technical production qualities. How many books will be distributed for how much? The final plan needs to balance three main tests: a) be affordable; b) be as low as possible in terms of net costs to the program; c) be as effective as needed to meet program objectives.

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CHAPTER VII

A CONCLUSION

When completing a book, there is a common urge to write a conclusion that wraps everything up into a neat and finished package. But this is a book about stories, and a story can always be followed by a sequel. In this chapter a preview of the future is provided, and graphic literature has a great future. Its appeal is evident from the growing number of examples of educational photonovels and comic books. For example, in the United States, as public and private organizations focus on adult illiteracy, more reading materials for teens and adults are appearing with the stories told through pictures and text. As more experience is gained, much will be learned about how to use this media, and this will be the subject of another book.

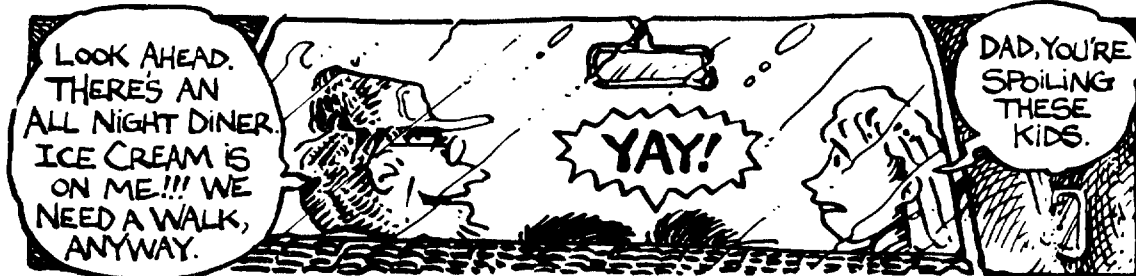
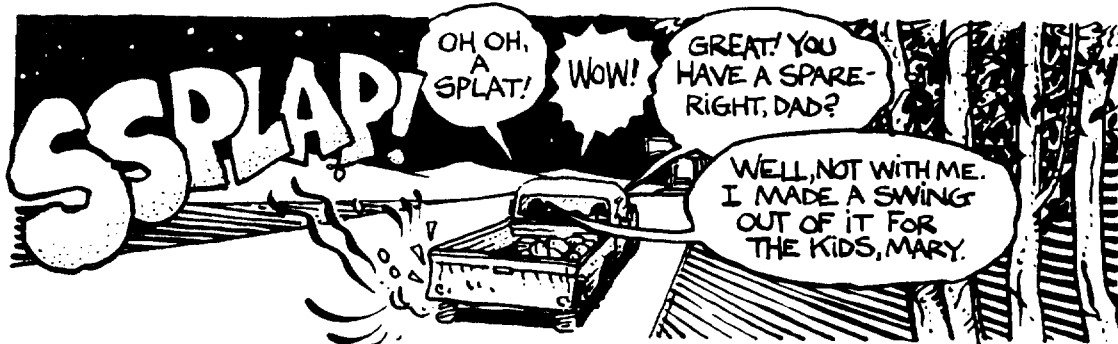
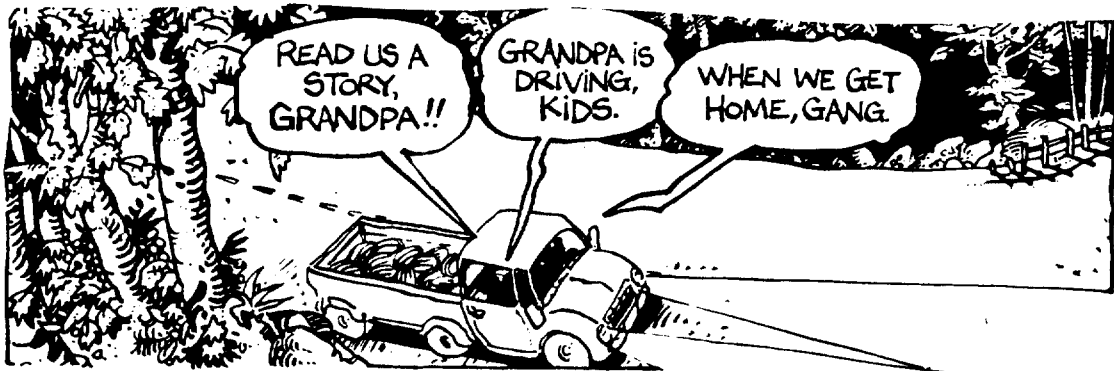
Three areas of activity look particularly promising for effective use of photonovels and comic books:

- o supplementary reading materials in support of formal literacy and adult education efforts,
- o serialized comic strips in newspapers, and
- o use of photonovels and comic books to deliver intimate or controversial health subjects.

The examples that follow give an indication of the direction that will be taken.

Supplementary Adult Reading

The comic book on the next page is an example of materials being developed by Cartoonists Across America (2705 E. 7th St., Long Beach, CA 90804) that support a national grassroots literacy effort. Faced with a new awareness of the problem of illiteracy in the United States, public and private organizations are developing programs that need these materials.



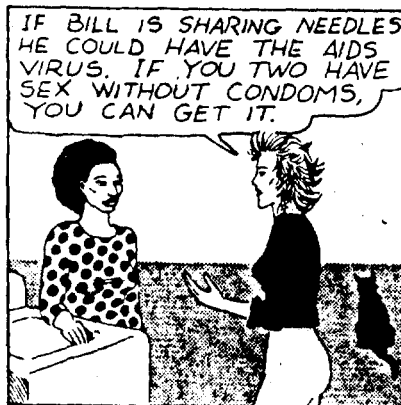
Serialized Comic Strips

Below is a comic strip developed by "El Agricultor", a commercially distributed newspaper produced by the Honduran service agency AVANCE. The strip explains Honduran Family Law through the story of a young, unmarried couple, the woman of which is several months pregnant. The series discusses the issues of legal and common law marriages in order to get a very large segment of the Honduran population to understand the impact non-married couples have on the record keeping, social security and school program planning. Such series appear to be increasing as educational organizations explore the use of commercial newspapers to deliver educational messages.



Delivery of Intimate or Controversial Health Messages

The comic strip below is from a pamphlet developed by the San Francisco AIDS Foundation. It depicts a conversation between two women about the care they must take in sexual relations with I.V. drug-users. This pamphlet is directed toward I.V. drug-users and their sexual partners who possess reading skills at less than a third grade level. Some panels in the pamphlet are sexually explicit. Such uses of the comic book format will increase as public agencies realize the utility of messages presented in text and pictures in a format which can be used by individuals or groups. Numerous health messages considered too intimate for open discussion can be delivered through this media.



Many more applications will be developed in the future. Educators will produce innovative, time-saving and cost-reducing methods of producing photonovels and comic books. Greater uses of commercial distribution channels will also be made. The authors are interested in hearing about new applications and receiving samples of any and all photonovels, comic books and picture strips. Any information about evaluations and market testing procedures will be enthusiastically welcomed. Please send your information to:

B.J. Cain and Associates, Inc.
1753 Lamont St. , N.W.
Washington, DC 20010

Attention: John Comings

Until the sequel,

THAT'S ALL FOLKS!